This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

F
83.4
G64

A 403559

Whitesboro', N. Y., September 1842.

Exchange

THE RIGHTS

AND THE WRONGS

OF

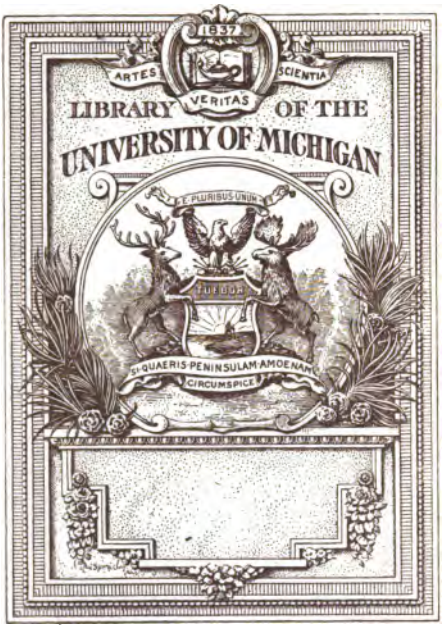
RHODE ISLAND.

BY WILLIAM GOODELL.

INSTITUTE PRESS.

COPY RIGHT SECURED.

☞ Four sheets periodical.—Postage, under 100 miles 6 cents, over 100 miles, 10 cents.


1837
ARTES
SCIENTIA
VERITAS
LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
E PLURIBUS UNUM
TUEBOR
SI QUAERIS PENINSULAM AMOENAM
CIRCUMSPICE

F
83.4
.G64

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

DATE DUE

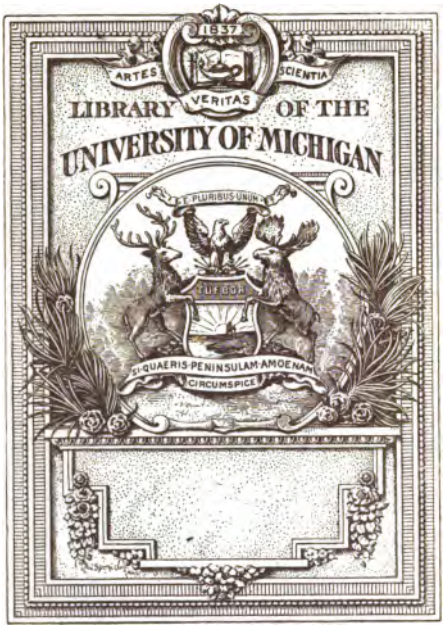
DEC 28 1992

DEC 30 1992

APR 02 2001

APR 02 2001

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
3 9015 02421 3830


1837
ARTES
VERITAS
SCIENTIA
LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
E PLURIBUS UNUM
SI QUAERIS PENINSULAM AMOENAM
CIRCUMSPICE

F
83.4
.G64

Goodell Anti-Slavery Collection No 61

97.
R5
G6

CHRISTIAN INVESTIGATOR.—No. 8.
Whitesboro, N. Y., September 1842.

91

THE RIGHTS

AND THE WRONGS

OF

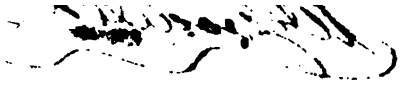
RHODE ISLAND:

COMPRISING VIEWS OF LIBERTY AND LAW, OF RELIGION AND RIGHTS, AS EXHIBITED IN THE RECENT AND EXISTING DIFFICULTIES IN THAT STATE.

BY WILLIAM GOODELL.

PRESS OF THE ONEIDA INSTITUTE.

MDCCCXLII.



Rights and Wrongs of Rhode Island.

"*The question* NOW *is, What can we do, and what ought we to do, in order to obstruct and check the growth and spread of* . . . . ARBITRARY POWER *among our churches, and* ASPIRING ECCLESIASTICS?"

Emmons, Vol. I. p. 36.

In answer to the above question of the late Dr. Emmons, we would suggest that the *very first* thing to be done, is to convince the people that their liberties are *in danger* from that quarter. And the story of the actual subversion of liberty and law, and the establishment of "arbitrary power" in Rhode Island, through the influence and by the aid of "aspiring ecclesiastics," seems well suited to that object.

LIBERTY AND LAW, RELIGION AND RIGHTS, IN RHODE ISLAND.

Great events are transpiring. They must be studied and understood. The Rhode Island controversy is no mere local concernment. It touches vitally, and harshly, the great interests of liberty and law, of religion and rights, not only in Rhode Island, but in the whole country. By neglecting or mistaking the facts and principles involved, the American people may unconsciously rivet their own fetters, and the American churches and ministry, instead of interposing a barrier against oppression and disorganization, may only swell and hasten the rising tide of destruction.

This, the story of Rhode Island will make manifest. Civil and political liberty have been violently subverted in that State, and a military despotism enthroned on the ruins (though in the abused name) of constitutional "*law and order*." The PEOPLE —the only lawful sovereign, under God, of a free civil government, have been overawed, and deposed, by aristocratic usurpation. The many, with the right on their side, have been crushed by the comparatively few, on whose side there was wealth, and

291924

station, and influence, and arms, and Presidential favor, and clerical sanction. A State government, regularly and peacefully constituted and organized, has been overturned by insurrection, with the aid and countenance of the Federal Executive, whose object, as his own official Gazette assures us, was the support of Southern slavery. The successful accomplishment of all this, is celebrated by public thanksgivings in the city churches; anthems are chanted, and discourses replete with the dogmas of despotism are delivered and published, by prominent ministers of the chief religious sects; and public journalists, political and religious, to a fearful extent lend their sanction.

MISREPRESENTATIONS.

Those who know human nature, and study human history, understand, that in an age like the present, such results could not have been reached, without the aid of misrepresentations, false colorings, wrong statements, unjust charges. As in all similar cases, the crushed friends of freedom are vilified, traduced, caricatured, wronged. Thus prejudices are engendered, and the public ear, to some extent, is closed against all appeals in their favor. Thus it has been with the friends of the enslaved, and thus it is with the disfranchised of Rhode Island.

In the present case, we count it needful to notice briefly, some of the misapprehensions afloat, before we attempt to discuss, in order, the main points involved in the controversy. To be heard with prejudiced ears, is sometimes worse than not to be heard at all.

TREATMENT OF THE COLORED PEOPLE.

The friends of human rights abroad, are told that they ought not to sympathize with the suffrage men in Rhode Island, nor plead their cause, because, in their efforts to obtain their rights, they did not include the people of color. Whatever the facts of the case may be, the principle of the objection is false, and to practice upon it would be fatal. On such a principle, no message of mercy could ever have reached our lapsed race. It is the same plea made by those who would blunt our sympathies for the Africans, because they enslave each other at home. On this principle, we should have withheld our sympathies and aid from Cinque, and such of his comrades on board the Amistad as had been engaged in the slave trade. If abolitionists may stand aloof from the oppressed *white* men of Rhode Island, because they, and their friends in other States, stand aloof from the oppressed *colored* men of the country, then may the oppressed whites of R. Island, and their friends, on the same principle, stand aloof from the efforts of abolitionists, on the ground that they do not care,

equally, for the rights of the poor and wronged *whites.* Such a prejudice against abolitionists has extensively existed, from the beginning, because, it has been said, there are aristocrats in their ranks. How much *occasion* there has been for this objection, remains, perhaps, to be ascertained. If abolitionists can see white liberty crushed in Rhode Island, without alarm and sympathy, the objection will acquire vast force. A "liberty party" for the benefit of *colored* men only, would become as ridiculous as a "democratic party" for the exclusive benefit of the *whites.* If we would be men of principle, and have the credit of being such, we must apply our principles impartially, and every where. As we do not cease to demand the political rights of the free people of color, though the majority of them do not join with us in pleading for the enslaved, so, likewise, we must not omit to demand the political rights of the disfranchised whites on account of their injustice to the people of color. The cause of liberty is one, and if its friends can not seek its unity, they might as well surrender, first as last, especially, since it has become manifest that the Northern and Southern aristocracy, hitherto rivals, have confederated for their overthrow. Abolitionists have long predicted that the Slave Power would crush Northern freedom, and they have hoped that the first instance that should occur, would rouse the free North. Shall they now acquiesce, or be silent, or neutral, while their predictions are fulfilling?

But the facts of the case have been misrepresented. Until within a few days, we have not, ourselves, got hold of the whole truth. It is not true that the suffrage men of R. Island (however deficient) have wholly forgotten or neglected the claims of the colored man. Still less is it true, that, in this respect, they have been behind their opponents. The chief leaders of the free suffrage movement were, from the first, in favor of making no distinction of color, and they have not yielded their object. This fact was seized upon by their opponents, and no pains spared to prejudice the public against them, on that ground. As two-thirds of the people of the State were disfranchised, there can be no question that such a weapon was found available, since prejudice against color exists every where. In the Convention by whom their Constitution was formed, it was deemed advisable, by the majority, to insert the word "*white*" among the qualifications of voters, but at the same time, they provided, in another clause, that the proposition to *strike out* that word "white" should be *submitted to the people,* at the first annual election after the first session of the Legislature under the Constitution, and there is no doubt it would have been stricken out, if their government had not been forcibly overturned. Their opponents, the landholders, in framing

their rival Constitution, (which was defeated, on the question of its adoption, by the votes of the suffrage party,) inserted, likewise, the same word "*white*," but they did *not* provide any means by which the people could strike it out. On the *contrary*, their proposed Constitution, as will be shown, would have been, in *all* its provisions, out of the reach of amendment by the majority of the people. So that the colored people would have now been without even the prospect of relief, if the suffrage party had accepted the landholders' Constitution, which they are so much blamed for not having done. Yet they did wrong, in not shaping their own otherwise excellent Constitution, as it should have been, in their own Convention. Up to May last, as we know, the suffrage party were hooted at, for wishing to admit "the *low Irish* and the *niggers*" to the polls. This we heard on the spot. But the tune has turned, now. When the contest came lately, to the sword, the city aristocracy were willing to have the help of the colored people, the most of whom were their dependents, their laborers, their coachmen and their domestics. They enrolled them then as firemen, and admitted some of them into the military. And in the now pending experiment of giving the people a Constitution, under the terrors of the "Algerine law," and while citizens are flying from the State to escape imprisonment merely for having voted under the new Suffrage Constitution, and for having defended it in argument,—and while the call for the appointment of delegates to the coming Convention is so apportioned as to throw the power into the hands of the aristocratic minority,—the admission of the dependent colored people to vote, as well as to fight, and the *boast of their support*, answers their selfish purposes, and is impudently trumpeted to their praise. That such facts should occur, only proves what every body should have known before, viz: that servility is not confined to color, and that any aristocracy under heaven will as soon wield the power of the colored people to suppress the liberty of the whites, as the power of the whites to hold the colored people in bondage, whenever it suits their convenience.

VIOLENCE—LAWLESSNESS—BAD CHARACTER.

"But then the suffrage party were so headlong and reckless—so violent and mobocratic—so blood-thirsty and ferocious!"—"They were such low and base characters—such plunderers and infidels"!

By whose testimony do you learn this? Suppose you hear both sides, and suspend judgment till you know the facts of the case? There are reckless and bad men in all sects and parties. There were infidels in the councils and armies of the American

Revolution. And did this decide the merits of the controversy with Britain, or make it proper to desert the cause of freedom? What if there *has* been lawlessness and disorganization? These are the natural results of despotism—the almost unfailing signs of its existence. How shall they be cured without removing their causes?

Our story will show that the suffrage party have been remarkable for their forbearance—that they peacefully and lawfully adopted a Constitution and organized a State government, after all prospect of obtaining their rights through the Charter authorities had failed—that in this they had the sanction of American Constitutional law—that they took up arms only in defense of the lawful and Constitutional government from insurrection—that the charges against them, of incendiary designs and of purposes of plunder, are infamously truthless—that they have done nothing *mobocratic*, unless the military defense of civil government (which, by the bye, *we* disapprove) be always to be accounted of that character. Their *military* movements we regret, as being, in our view, bad policy, as well as wrong in principle. But they only took up arms to support the *Right*, and to support Constitutional "law and order," after their opponents took up arms against both. Their opponents had taught from the pulpit the duty of maintaining civil government by arms, and *they* did nothing worse than to *practise* that doctrine.

As to the *characters* of the suffrage men, we speak deliberately and on intelligent advisement, when we challenge a comparison between them and their opponents. Take the leaders of the two parties, or take them in the masses. Search for infidels, or licentious, or profane, or dishonest, or Sabbath-breaking, or immoral men—or, on the other hand, select temperance men, abolitionists, men of acknowledged piety in the churches, to be found in the two parties, and in either case the suffrage cause need not shrink from the scrutiny.

But suppose it were otherwise? How would that affect the merits of the case? It is a question of inalienable human rights. Is infidelity to be cured by Christian oppression? Will you invade men's rights to teach them honesty and good morals? Must Honesty and Humanity blush to be found redressing human wrongs, because the victims are dishonest and vicious? So thought the Pharisees, but so thought not the Savior. The slaves, it is said, are so thievish and vicious, that the good should not seek their freedom. It would be strange if there were no bad men among the *majority* of the people of Rhode Island. But shall liberty therefore be crushed? Shall despotism rule the earth, so long as it can plead the vices of the peo-

ple? Is not despotism itself one of the giant vices, the parent of vices, that needs to be removed, before the world can be reformed?

Those who have been most forward to blacken the characters of the suffrage men, to heap upon them the most opprobrious epithets, and represent them as a low rabble, have nevertheless made some very remarkable admissions. Dr. Tucker, in his discourse, p. 16, says:—"The evil has infected the churches"——"Sad divisions have taken place—friend has been arrayed against friend, brother against brother—lines of alienation have run through families and firms of business."—And Dr. Wayland says their movements "have been fostered and abetted, in some cases, by the civil magistrates, and yet more, in some instances, by men who have been nurtured among us, who have sat at our tables, and been warmed by our fire-sides."—(Disc. p. 8.) And again,—"I have been informed that a considerable number of professing Christians, in this city, have been deluded into a participation in these transactions."—(p. 30.) And yet again:—"This has been done, [i.e. leading citizens have been 'denounced as tyrants and oppressors,'] or at least it has been countenanced and abetted by men who call themselves the disciples of the Lord Jesus, who partake of the elements of that body which was broken, and that blood which was shed for our sins, and who profess to be cultivating in their hearts the temper of a holy Heaven."—(p. 25.)

Is it not proper that the controversy between such men and their accusers should be patiently examined? So we should think. And we will therefore proceed to take up the discussion in due order.

ORIGIN AND CHARACTER OF THE "CHARTER."

As the aristocratic insurgents in Rhode Island, a known minority of the people, claim the lawful authority to govern the State, under the old Charter of Charles II. of England, and since to the present time, they have uniformly refused to lend *their* sanction to the formation of such a Republican Constitution, by the people, as should *define their rights*, and place the government in the *hands of the majority*, and since they deny the validity and legality of the Constitution recently formed by the People, *because* they themselves had not given, and *will not* give it their sanction, and are determined to hold on to their power under "the Charter," at the expense of a civil war, and by means of martial law, it becomes necessary to examine the history and nature of this magic instrument, and find out, if we can, the secret of its claims over Popular Sovereignty, and inalienable human rights.

The settlement of Rhode Island was commenced by Roger Williams and others, in 1636. Sir Henry Vane, by authority of Parliament, granted its first Charter in 1643–4. The union of Providence Plantations, Warwick and Rhode Island proper, under this Charter, was in a few years broken, but in 1654, commissioners from all the towns agreed on a re-union, and the government, under the Charter, was re-organized. Democratic usages prevailed here, as in the other N. England Provinces, and religious liberty was especially and signally asserted and guarded. On the restoration of Charles II., in 1660, the inhabitants took measures to secure their privileges by a new Charter, with the Royal assent. This was effected, the same year, and the document runs in the usual kingly style, "*of our especial grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion.*" Here we have the "republican form of government" of Rhode Island, containing on its face a flat denial of the right of popular sovereignty, and granting, as a royal concession, and as a privilege, what every republican claims as his inalienable right.—In its immediate provisions, however, the Charter was all, or nearly all, the inhabitants of the Province had adventured to ask of their monarch. It granted freedom of conscience "in religious concernments." It was the creation, in customary form, of *a political corporation*, with general powers of self-government. *It empowers the Assembly to admit* persons *free, of the company, and prescribes no terms or qualifications whatever.* Before this Charter, and under that of 1643, the rule of admission was "being found meet for the service of the body politic."

ACTION OF THE ASSEMBLY, UNDER THE CHARTER.

It is to the Charter Assembly, rather than to the instrument itself, that the chief practical mischiefs under it are to be charged. In 1666, an Act of Assembly was passed, *delegating* to the towns the power to *admit* "freemen,"—(for so the *voters* alone are termed, in Rhode Island.) It was not until 1724, that an Act was passed, requiring electors to have a freehold estate of £100, or 40 shillings rent, and declaring the oldest son of such a freeholder to be a freeman, without qualification. After various changes, the amount, in real estate, was reduced to £40, or $134 of the federal currency, which continues to the present day. Yet neither does this, nor any *other* qualification, (except being the oldest son of a freeholder,) entitle any man, in Rhode Island, to the rights of a "freeman," unless the "freemen" of the town where he resides choose to propound and vote him in, as a fellow-freemen, which they are not legally bound to do.—The representation of the several towns in the General Assembly, having been

apportioned by the Charter, and no provision being made for a new apportionment, in lapse of time, became very unequal: and the Assembly, since the American Revolution, having been absolute, has done nothing to remedy the evil. And a minority, only, of the adult male population are "freemen."

PRESENT VALIDITY OF THE CHARTER.

By the Revolution, the authority of the British crown was thrown off, and the Royal Charter of Charles II. expired, and became a dead letter, of course. A variety of considerations prove this, and prove, likewise, that the present action of the Assembly under it, is an unlawful and unconstitutional usurpation. 1. The assertion of State Independency, by the National Declaration of Independence, annulled the Charter, *in form*.—2. By establishing Popular Sovereignty, it denied the *principle* upon which the Charter was based; and by which the General Assembly, either with or without the Charter, (representing, as it does, only a minority of the citizens,) continues to wield the power of the State. 3. The R. I. Assembly, itself, gave its own ratification of all this, on the 12th of July 1776, by adopting, as their own, the Declaration of Independence, made, a few days before, by the Continental Congress.—4. The Constitution of the United States, to which Rhode Island has assented,* "guaranties to every State in the Union a republican form of government," but neither the Royal Charter, nor the General Assembly representing a minority, (whether acting with or without authority from the Charter,) exhibit any thing deserving the name of a republican form of government. This is apparent from what has already been stated, and other proofs will appear, as we proceed.—5. The People—not the General Assembly, nor the land-holders, were the conquerors and successors of the British crown.—6. The people, as we shall soon show, have formed a new Constitution, and regularly organized a State government under it.

PROGRESS OF THE USURPATION—ITS DESPOTISM.

So far from relinquishing their power under a Charter which they had themselves solemnly declared to be no longer of any binding authority, the Assembly of Rhode Island, from that day to the present, have exercised uncontrolled and unlimited power. Except in the matter of freedom in religious concernments, (the practical value of which, in their keeping, we shall see in its place,) the Charter itself had put but one restriction upon the

* The Charter Government refused to send delegates to the Convention that framed the United States Constitution, and did not come into the Union till May 1790.

power of the General Assembly, and that was, that "the Acts of the Assembly shall not be repugnant to the laws of *this our realm of England*"! So that unless the Assembly transcend these oppressions of the British Government that caused the Revolution—the *Charter* imposes upon it no restrictions or restraints! Yet, as a matter of fact, the Assembly has transcended even these bounds. For while the Parliament of Britain taxed the colonies, without allowing their representation in the *National* legislature, leaving the colonists free to choose delegates to their own Provincial Assemblies, and to manage their county and town matters as they pleased, the Assembly of Rhode Island taxes its subjects, without allowing *the great majority* of them any vote, any where, either in town, city, county, State or National matters! The Charter too, empowers the Executive, during the recess of the Legislature, to establish and enforce "all methods, orders, rules and directions" that it may *deem proper!* So that, as one writer has remarked, "there is, under the Charter, a despotic Assembly *in perpetuam*, and a despotic Executive, *ad interim*, against whom the people" have no manner of protection. Those acquainted in R. Island, for 30 years past, know very well, that this absolute omnipotence and irresponsibility of the General Assembly have been the proverbial and taunting boast of those by whom its power had been wielded, and who have, insolently and insultingly, set the people at defiance.

CHOICE OF RULERS. SECURITY OF RIGHTS.

Will it be said that the people have had their remedy, in the choice of their rulers? To what *portion* of the people may this be said? And to *whom?* Can it be said to the *poor*, who most need the protection of the government? None but holders of real estate, and their eldest sons, are even *eligible* for election to the station of "freemen," or voters. And what is their comparative number? The number of adult white males, in 1840, was computed at 25,600, and the whole number of votes polled at the Presidential election, that year, was 8662, being the largest number ever polled in the State. So that less than *one-third* governed the other *two-thirds*. Estimates, at other times, have been made, that *three-fifths*, and sometimes *three-fourths*, of the entire adult male population have been disfranchised. [A sufficient refutation, by the bye, of the pretense that the people have all along, or until lately, been generally satisfied with the existing order of things!]

But the story of *minority* usurpation does not end here. The inequalities of representation have been hinted at. See a few exemplifications of this inequality. "*One* free-holder in Bar-

ington," it is said, "has as much weight in the government as *twenty-one* free-holders in Providence, *nine* in Cumberland, or *eighteen* in Smithfield." Again, "*one* free-holder in Newport is equal to *four* in the former, or *three* in the latter place." Once more. In 1840, "*seventy-two* representatives were chosen. Of these, *thirty-eight*, more than a majority, were chosen from towns possessing a population of 29,036 inhabitants, and which cast 2,846 electoral votes. The remaining *thirty-four* representatives were chosen from towns possessing a population of 79,801 inhabitants, and which cast 5,776 electoral votes." 'So that, while 8,662, or about *one-third* of the adult male population, had the right of suffrage, and *nominally* governed the State, yet 2,846, or less than *one-eighth*, chose the majority of the popular branch of the Assembly, and *really* held the balance of power.'

Thus much for the security of human rights in R. Island, arising from popular election. The next plea we hear is, that the minority have governed with so much justice, that the people can trust them with their rights, and therefore the Sovereignty of the People is not worth contending for. This plea comes from the pen of President Wayland. Let us examine it.

Security for their rights, and especially security from the encroachments of the government, is among the inalienable rights of the people—the guaranty of all the rest of their rights. How can it be said, then, that the minority govern with *justice*, when they govern without the *consent* of the governed? How can individual rights be said to be *safe*, in the keeping of those who not only refuse to *secure* them, but absolutely *take them away?* The security and the rights of the disfranchised of Rhode Island rest upon the same basis as the security and the rights of the disfranchised of the South. Happy people! They are *protected*, forsooth, by their kind masters, who *rob* them!

The Charter Government *permits* suffrage, as a privilege, to be extended or contracted at its pleasure. It resolutely refuses to recognize the *right*. This the present contest discloses. It can give, and it can take away. *It*, and not the People, is Sovereign. It follows that there has been no permanency—nothing upon which the voter himself can rely—in respect to the exercise of the franchise. The power that made him a "freeman," can unmake him. The "Assembly" that fixed the qualification to $134 value of real estate, and changed it half a dozen times, can fix it at $134,000, if it pleases, and there is no remedy. It might *extend* the franchise in the manner it has sometimes promised (but neglected) to do, and then take it away again, at its pleasure. Not only the Assembly, but the town meeting of exclusives, claims, by delegation, the same right to exclude *whomsoever* it pleases, and whatsoever qualifications they may possess.

The "*governed*" have no power to demand any redress or amendment. This was a necessary feature of the "Royal Charter," and those who wrongfully pretend to have inherited its kingly powers, very distinctly assert, now, at the point of the bayonet, and in the abused name of "law and order," the same disorganizing and lawless claim.

"Under the Charter," says an able writer,* "the people can have no rights secured to them independent of the Government—even the Act "declaratory of certain rights of the people of this State' is but a *Legislative Act*, and may be repealed whenever the Legislature think proper." The people hold *all* their rights, just as the southern slave holds certain articles of property, during the good pleasure of his master.

OTHER RIGHTS INVADED—ADDITIONAL BADGES OF SERVITUDE.

It has been accounted the peculiar hardship of the American slave, that he can not sue, in a court of law, as could the slaves of the ancient Greeks and Romans. But two-thirds, at least, of the adult white males of R. Island may, in this particular, be ranked with the southern slaves, and below the slaves of the Athenians.

In R. Island—"No person whatever, since the Revolution, has been permitted to bring a suit at any court of law in the State, except he be a free-holder, or except he procure a free-holder to endorse his original writ, or cause of action." This, too, in the face of the "*Act declaring certain rights, &c*," (above named,) which says:—"*Every person* within this State ought to find a certain remedy, by having recourse to the laws, for all injuries or wrongs which he may receive in his person, property or character." "And yet," says the same writer, "by another Act it is provided that 'no person who is not a *free-holder* shall have, out of the Clerk's office, any writ, &c. or unless some sufficient *free-holder* shall endorse his Christian and surname on the back of the same'—thereby denying that any of the people of this State are 'persons' entitled to redress, but *free-holders*, or owners of real estate."

The right of trial by Jury has been thought one of the great safeguards of freedom. "But this right," it is affirmed on good authority,† "is enjoyed by less than two-fifths of the citizens of Rhode Island." None but "freemen" are empanneled and can sit as jurors. This fact, by the bye, puts additional terrors into the hands of the Charter government, by whom the Constitutional Governor Dorr and his adherents are charged with the crime of

* B. Cowell, Esq. of Providence.

† "A Member of the Boston Bar," in Review of "Wayland's Discourse."

high treason. They can not be tried by their peers. They must be tried by those who can not be considered impartial jurors. And besides, all the Courts of Justice are so created and constructed as to be but "Star Chamber" Courts, "a shield to *the government*, rather than to *the people*."

Another law of Rhode Island, authorizes the Town Council, when any person comes within their limits, whom they dislike, or whom, for any cause they desire to get rid of, or whom, in the words of the law, 'they shall determine to be an unsuitable person to become an inhabitant' of their town, to give notice to that person, (he not being a freeman,) to depart out of the town within a certain period, on penalty, if he fail to go, of being *bound for one year into servitude*, TO ANY CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES!*

Very plainly, by this Statute, any new resident, not a freeholder, might be "bound out into slavery at the South! What a parallel have we here to those infamous laws by which free colored citizens are sold into slavery! Another section of the same Act "renders it imperative on all who entertain strangers, to report them within seven days, to the President of the Town Council."*

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY OUTRAGED.

Under shelter of the enactments just mentioned, Official Town Dignitaries and others have, ever and anon, annoyed and insulted with the threat of banishment, itinerant and transient Missionaries, Agents, and others, who have sojourned temporarily in the State. In so doing, they have treated with utter contempt that clause of the U. S. Constitution that guaranties to the citizens of each State the right of free and peaceful sojourn in every other State. Here, again, we trace the close resemblance between the lawless despotism of the slave States, and that of the Charter Government of Rhode Island. That Anti-Slavery lecturers should have had the terrors of this law held over them, need excite no surprise. But it is not, perhaps, so commonly known that others have fallen under the same ban. A single specimen may suffice. Rev. William Fuller, a respectable minister of the gospel, [as "regularly educated and ordained" as the most fastidious could desire,] was preaching, about ten or twelve years ago, at Washington Village, in Rhode Island, in a house erected by the contributions of Christians, many of whom were disfranchised. His services were highly appreciated by a portion of the inhabitants. But his faithful testimony against rum-selling, made him obnoxious to a number of "the free-holders," by whom he was

* "A Member of the Boston Bar," in Review of "Wayland's Discourse."

formally notified that he should be banished from the town, unless he altered his style of preaching. He pursued the even tenor of his way, until the threat was literally fulfilled. Either by order of the town authorities, or else by vote of the "freemen" in open town meeting, (we are not positive which,) he was authoritatively and officially ordered to leave the town, with which order he peaceably complied, and left the town and the State. He had previously been an ordained minister in another town in Rhode Island—was afterwards settled at or near River Head, on Long Island, and has since supplied, for some time, the pulpit of the First Presbyterian Church in Utica. We are thus minute, to show that R. Island legislation, under the Charter, is not a dead letter, and that the persons recently described as low vagabonds and rebels, are not its only victims.

The banishment of a minister of the gospel, under authority of the Charter Government, for no crime but preaching against the sins of the "free-holders," is a precious comment upon the boasted guaranty of "freedom in matters of religious concernment," in the land of Roger Williams, showing how little any such guaranty is worth, under a government irresponsible to the people, and undefined by a Constitution.

Another specimen of the tone and style of Town Meetings of the "*freemen*," may be found in the resolution adopted and enforced, in Providence, a few years since, excluding all persons except themselves from the Town House, during Town Meetings.

POPULAR MOVEMENTS AGAINST DESPOTISM.

Not long after the State of Rhode Island assented to the Federal Constitution, in May 1790, there began to be movements in favor of a State Constitution, an extension of the suffrage, and an equalized representation. The petitions for this object became so importunate and so numerous, that, about the year 1797 or 8, the Charter Assembly felt constrained to call a Convention, *not* of the PEOPLE, however, but of the privileged *free-holders*. This Convention framed a Constitution, (if our information be correct,) which was submitted to the *free-holders*, and rejected *by them*. These particulars we have from a clergyman, who was a member of the College in Providence at the time. In 1811, the effort was renewed, but with similar want of success.

From 1819 to 1822 inclusive, a period of four years, the State was agitated with the same discussion, but with no visible effect on the Charter Government.

In 1824 the Assembly called a Convention of the "*freemen*," to form a Constitution. This Convention recommended an equalized representation *among* the "freemen," but a motion to extend the suffrage received but *three* votes. The proposed Constitution was rejected.

In 1829, after an animated and elaborate newspaper discussion of two years, petitions were presented to the Assembly for an extension of the suffrage. They were referred to a Committee, who reported an insulting reply to the petitioners, "describing them as a degraded portion of the community, and reminding them that if they were dissatisfied with the institutions of the State, they were at liberty to leave it! The Report was received, and printed, and considered, with much exultation, as the most effective rebuke ever administered to the advocates of liberal suffrage in R. Island."*

This was the courtesy extended by the Charter Assembly to two-thirds of the adult male population of Rhode Island, including probably seven-eighths of all of them who are and have been the efficient and consistent friends of temperance, moral reformation, human liberty and social improvement in that State. These characteristics have only made the extension of the suffrage the more difficult there, because such qualifications are the last that the conservators of aristocratic misrule in Rhode Island would wish to see coming to the polls. There is no "Liberty Party" in Rhode Island; because the materials for such a party are disfranchised. We have in our mind's eye a very prominent individual, now deceased, who for many years notoriously controlled the oligarchy of the State, whose known hostility to common and Sunday schools was generally attributed to his fear of the effect of popular intelligence upon his political influence, at a time when no small number even of the "free-holders" and their "oldest sons" could neither read nor write. It is undeniable that the progress of learning, among the people, has been accompanied with a rising demand for a free government. If, (as Pres. Wayland claims,) some of the conservators of the Charter have befriended common schools, it only proves them less discerning than the politician just described.

The tone of the Legislative Report of 1829 has been but too faithfully echoed by the presses of R. Island, with few exceptions, from that time to the present. The majority, including the most moral and patriotic portion of the people, have been charged with the foulest crimes, and blackened by every epithet of abuse. The cry of treason against the abolitionists, in 1834–5–6, in that State, was only an incidental form of the same policy. And the same Mr. Hazard, who drew up the insulting Report just adverted to, was likewise the advocate of penal enactments against anti-slavery discussions, the draftsman of a Bill for that object, which, as Chairman of a Committee on that subject, he introduced into the General Assembly of R. Island: a measure first proposed and recommended by a regular town meeting of the "freemen" of Newport. Thus identified, at every step, are the enemies of northern and of southern freedom.

In 1832 another effort in favor of an extended suffrage met the fate of its predecessors.

---

* Vide Gov. Dorr's Message.

In 1834 the effort was renewed, in the shape of a regularly organized political party. But what could a political party do without voters? The very object of the party was to obtain the franchise! A few only of the "freemen" could be induced to join in the movement, though, as in the former struggles, great pains were taken to diffuse light, and show the benefits of a free government in contrast with the abuses existing in R. Island. At first, the Assembly showed some symptoms of alarm, and, as on former occasions, assurances were given by influential politicians, that something efficient should be done. The Assembly went so far in 1834 as to call a Convention—*not* of the PEOPLE—but of the "*freemen*"—the *landocracy*. In this Convention, a proposition to extend the suffrage received only *seven* votes, and the members dropping off, one after another, the Convention dispersed, for want of a quorum! Yet the free suffrage party struggled on, four years, when it became extinct, without having made any perceptible degree of change in the minds of the "freemen," who seemed determined never to yield their monopoly of power. This brings down the history until 1838. An entire generation had thus melted away in the fruitless endeavor to recover their inalienable, God-given rights. Among them were many soldiers of the Revolution, who died without obtaining the liberties for which they fought, or learning the practical value of the far-famed "Declaration" which, on every returning fourth of July, was subjected to the mockery of a pompous reading, amid the roar of cannon, and the senseless huzzas of the unreflecting.

THE EIGHTH GENERAL STRUGGLE.

Seven distinct struggles for liberty in Rhode Island, within less than fifty years past, we have already recorded. The people perhaps began to think themselves entitled to a Jubilee. But they did not expect it, without another struggle. It came. It was severe, but it was successful.

In the latter part of 1840, an Association of mechanics, chiefly non-free-holders, was organized in Providence, and similar Associations were soon formed throughout the State. Once more, in January 1841, petitions were sent to the Old Charter Assembly. "*They were insultingly passed by, without any notice or action.*" Congress had set the precedent of excluding petitions for the laborers of the South. The Rhode Island Assembly knew no difference between the laborers of the South and of the North. They seem to have profited by the hints of McDuffie and Calhoun, of Pickens and Leigh. They had learned how to deal with "the white slaves of the North." But a petition was presented from the town of Smithfield, in favor of a more *equal representation among* "FREEMEN." This was acted upon Feb. 6, and a resolution adopted, requesting the "*freemen*" to choose delegates to a Convention to be held in November, 1841.

FORMATION OF A STATE CONSTITUTION.

The disfranchised non-free-holders, well knowing that the contem-

plated Convention of "*freemen*" was not intended to do any thing effective for *them*, invited a Mass Convention of the people at Providence, April 17th, 1841, "to consider their rights, grievances and remedies." "A second Mass Convention was held at Newport, May 5th: and a State Committee was appointed, with power to call a Convention of the people at large, for the formation of a Republican Constitution. But this call was delayed until the June session of the Charter Assembly, at which Mr. Atwell, a free suffrage member, introduced a Bill to admit *tax-payers* to vote with the "*freemen*," in the choice of delegates to the November Convention, appointed by the Assembly. *Ten* votes only, out of *sixty-two*, were given in favor of this motion, proving clearly that *the People* had not mistaken the objects of that *Charter Assembly's Convention*. On the 5th of July, therefore, their Mass Convention assembled again at Providence, and instructed their State Committee to issue forthwith, their call. This was accordingly done. Delegates were duly chosen, according to an equal ratio, and in doing it moderators and clerks were chosen, in the primary meetings, held in nearly all the towns in the State, and the business was transacted according to customary usages in Rhode Island. A large majority of the delegates assembled in Convention at Providence, Oct. 4th, 1841, formed a plan of a Constitution, and adjourned till the next month, that the plan might be submitted to the public scrutiny, and be discussed among the people. They re-assembled in November, made several amendments of their plan, passed upon the Constitution, and submitted it to the people for their adoption or rejection. "The adult male population, who were citizens of the United States, and had their permanent residence, or home, in the State," were invited to vote upon this question of adoption or rejection. This was done, agreeably to appointment of the Convention, Dec. 27th, 28th and 29th, 1841, and the result was the adoption of the Constitution "by a vote of 13,944, being more than three-fifths of the entire male population of Rhode Island." These votes were duly returned to the People's Convention, examined and counted, and the Constitution declared to be adopted. "The report of the Counting Committee was transmitted to the Charter Assembly, at its January session, 1842, and a motion made (by Mr. Atwell) in that body, for a Committee to examine the return, which was negatived by a large majority." *So the Charter Assembly* REFUSED TO INQUIRE *whether or no the People had adopted a Constitution!*

CONVENTION OF THE LAND-HOLDERS—WRINGING AND TWISTING.

In the mean time, the *Landholders' Convention*, by invitation of the Charter Assembly, had assembled, the first Monday in November 1841, and "proceeded to draft a Constitution. On the question of the extension of the suffrage, the Convention 'VOTED, *to exclude the eldest son of freemen, and admit such* WHITE *male adult citizens as possessed taxable property to the amount of* FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS.'" The Convention then adjourned to meet again the 15th day of Feb-

ruary following. This they did without formally passing a vote upon the plan of Constitution, as a whole. This circumstance, together with the subsequent abandonment of this five hundred dollar qualification, at their adjourned session in February, (*after* the adoption of the People's Constitution,) has been made the basis of an evasion, by means of which the impression has been successfully and extensively made, abroad, that no such property qualification was ever intended. The *fact*, nevertheless, remains, as above stated, and had there been no such event as the adoption of the Free Suffrage Constitution, by the people, it is manifest that no such favorable change in the Constitution of the "Freemen's" Convention would have been witnessed. This is evident, by the testimony of their own defenders. A. C. Barstow, in his Letter in the Emancipator of July 21st, in answer to Wm. Goodell, and speaking of this period, Nov. 1841, says:

"But little interest was taken in the matter, [i. e, the free suffrage movement,] up to this time. The legal party always looking upon it as a *farce*, never opposed, *nor took any notice of it.*"

Of course, then, they had no intention of enacting the "farce" of free suffrage, in which they pretend the people themselves took "but little interest"! And since they "*took no notice* of" this "farce" of the people's petitioning for the franchise, it follows that the pretense of this same Mr. Barstow, in a previous paragraph, that "the prayer" (of the *free suffrage* men) "to the Legislature was answered," (instead of the prayer of the "freemen" of Smithfield, for an equalized representation,) is proved to be without a shadow of foundation. Equally explicit is the Discourse of President Wayland, p. 14, where he says:—

"It is proper to add, that *until very lately*, it has been really *doubtful* whether a change was actually desired by any large number of our citizens. Petitions on this subject, were, it is true, several times presented, *but they never seemed to arise from any strong feeling, nor to assume a form that called for immediate action.* It has really been matter of surprise to me, that the question awakened *so little attention.*" [*!!!*]

Who will believe that, with these views, any "immediate action" would have been taken by the holders of power, had not the people themselves asserted the sovereignty which God, and reason, and the Declaration of Independence, had awarded to them? How amazing is the effrontery of these men! In no possible way——no—not by nearly a half century of exertion, (so they tell us,) could the least impression be made upon them, that the petitioners were in earnest—or at least "any large *number* of them"—not enough of them to cause any *alarm*, and *therefore*, "immediate action was not called for!" The disfranchised of Rhode Island had presented themselves before the Charter Assembly, about as many times, by their petitions, as Moses and Aaron, on behalf of the Hebrews, and on a similar errand, had

presented themselves before Pharaoh; they had waited many years longer than did the Hebrews, for the granting of their petitions—but the Assembly thought it "really doubtful whether any change was actually desired, by any large number of the citizens"! The petitioners had adopted the plan of "carrying this object into effect by means of voluntary associations." So says President Wayland, and he intimates their dangerous strength and power. Yet he saw no evidence in them of "any strong feeling," and was "quite surprised that the question awakened so little attention"! A political party had been organized—a newspaper had been established and patronized—money had been expended—immense Mass Conventions, the largest gatherings ever witnessed in the State, had been held at Providence and Newport, and marched in procession through the streets—measures adopted for forming a Constitution—delegates to the Convention appointed in nearly all the towns in the State—but "the legal party always *looked upon it as* A FARCE!"—(precious proof of the clearness of their vision!) and, (without ever imagining that they had already granted the prayer of the *disfranchised*, and had, *therefore*, called a Convention of the "*freemen*,") they "TOOK NO NOTICE" whatever of all that was passing around them.

But no sooner had the people taken the additional step of acting upon their rights, than—behold! the tables are, at once, turned, and *now*, forsooth, the people have been so disorganizing and rebellious, that a fair pretext is found for their subjugation by martial law! Yes! And then they try to make the nation believe they were about to give them all they asked; had it not been for their insubordination to law!

But we anticipate the discussion. We must patiently record the facts. We must finish the history of this landholder's Constitution. We have noticed the refusal of the Charter Assembly, at its June session, to admit the tax-payers to vote, with the freemen, in choosing delegates to their Convention. We have seen also, the disposition, up to November, to establish a strong property qualification. We have seen, that, up to that time, they regarded the whole movement a "farce." But the successful adoption of a State Constitution by the people, had *begun* to convince them that something more than "a farce" was in progress—that the long-neglected and spurned petitions had arisen from "strong feeling," on the part of "a large number of the citizens."—What now could be done, to prevent the Constitution just adopted from going into operation? We shall presently see what they attempted to do. Yet other facts must be recorded in their order.

WISDOM AND EQUITY.

At the session of the Charter Assembly, in January 1842, Mr. Atwell, a member of that body, and also a member of the People's Convention, introduced an Act, reciting the doings of that body, and requiring the Assembly to yield up its authority to the new government, which was to be organized under the Constitution. *The Bill was re-*

jected. "Mr. Atwell then moved for an inquiry into the number of qualified voters who had cast their ballots for the new Constitution. This, too, was negatived, and the entire subject treated with marked contempt. Having thus refused to make the *inquiry*, the Charter Assembly tacitly admitted that the "asserted majority" was a true and real one—they evinced their conviction of the fact, and all cavil and controversy on *that* point, on their part, was thus forever foreclosed—and their position, in this respect, *they* well understand.

Something, however, had been gained. The Landholders' Convention was to meet again in February, and the Charter Assembly, now, for the first time, consented to humor the people, by passing an Act which authorized all persons who would be allowed to vote under the Constitution that should be formed in February, to vote on the question of the adoption or rejection of that Constitution, in the *framing* of which they had not been permitted to participate. They insulted the people and common sense, at the same time, by passing *another* Act, declaring the People's Constitution, that had just been adopted, "an assumption of the powers of government, a violation of *the rights* of the existing *government*, and of the *rights of the people at large!*" That is to say, "the people at large" had violated their own rights, by doing their own business, and asserting their own supreme authority!

CONSERVATIVE KNAVERY, AND POPULAR SAGACITY.

Rejection of the Landholders' Constitution—and why?—The Landholders' Convention completed, at its February session, its draft of a Constitution, which was submitted to the people, on the 21st, 22d and 23d of March. IT WAS REJECTED, by a majority of nearly 700. This rejection is one of the facts never disputed by either party, and may fairly be considered as a virtual ratification or re-adoption of the People's Constitution of the December previous. What further demonstration of the will of the majority could the Charter Assembly ask? They and their opponents, each in turn, had tried their hand, in framing a Constitution for the people. Their opponents had obtained an overwhelming majority for theirs—and they had sustained an acknowledged defeat—a rejection of *theirs*. How could they then with any pretension to fair dealing, or regard to "law and order," hold out in the controversy any longer?

But it has been said that this Convention of the landholders was "defeated by the efforts of ambitious and designing men"! Who is it, that has authority to say *that*, and to nullify the sovereign people's acts on that ground? What a "disorganizing" doctrine have we here? By this rule, any President or Governor might hold his seat, after the election of his successor, upon a similar plea.

An examination of the landholder's Constitution will show the grounds of its rejection. It was obnoxious to the people, in the following particulars:—

1. It did not provide for that grand safeguard of electoral independence, that terror of tyrants—that dread of demagogues—the VOTE

BY BALLOT *without the name of the voter on the ticket.* The mode is left to the dictation of the General Assembly, and the people had reason to apprehend that a mode would be adopted, which, instead of conferring *real,* available power, on the OPERATIVES of the manufacturing districts, (dependent as they are, on their employers, and subjected as they *might* be, to their scrutiny and dictatorship,) would only tend to swell the already overgrown power of the CAPITALISTS.

2. It did not destroy the *freehold caste,* nor the peculiar qualification of the freeholder's oldest son. These stood in the same position as they did before, but the franchise was farther extended by admitting *white* native American citizens, twenty-one years of age, who had resided in the State *two* years, and in the town six months. Freeholders and their eldest sons could vote after a residence of one year.

3. Of course, it left all except freeholders without that right of jury trial by their peers so essential to their security, and even to their protection from persons claiming them as slaves.

4. It did not place naturalized citizens on a level with the soil-born, but required of them *three* years residence, *in addition* to the *five* required by the United States, and that they should *own real estate* in the town where they might vote. This would prevent a large number of operatives in the factories from voting at all. Many more would forfeit the right, by moving to another village for employment. And nearly all of them would hold the elective franchise, if at all, at the pleasure and good will of their employers. Thus, they might become the tools of the capitalists, instead of becoming independent freemen.

5. No provision was made enabling the people to strike out the word "*white*" and thus extend the suffrage to the colored population.

6. It did not recognize the inalienable rights of man, nor the sovereignty of the People, nor their right to frame, alter and abolish governments at their pleasure.

Many other defects might be enumerated. But two positive abominations, each one, of itself, sufficient to insure its rejection by a people who understood their rights, or regarded fundamental equity, deserve special attention.

FIRST. Its apportionment of representation was so unequal, that, under its operation, the State would have been still governed, as hitherto, BY A MINORITY! It threw the control of the Assembly into the hands of towns and districts containing *less than one-third of the inhabitants!*

SECOND. The Assembly, *thus* constituted and governed, was to hold, *in its own hands,* virtually, the question of amendment or non-amendment, of this defective and unjust Constitution. All movements in the direction of change, were to originate with the Assembly elected by a minority of the people. *If they* proposed amendments, and the people concurred, and *if*—AFTER the PEOPLE had approved them, the Assembly still agreed to it, then, but not otherwise, the Constitution could be amended! This mode of amendment will ap-

pear in its true colors, when it is added that there was no provision made for a new apportionment of the representation, already unequal, and likely to grow into a still greater inequality, in a few years.

So that the landholders' Constitution, after all, was a knavish trap, to cheat the people with a show of sovereignty, and never put them in real possession of it, no—not even for a single hour. More than this, it was a dishonest trick to gull them into a ratification, an agreement, to many of the same abuses which now exist only as sheer usurpations, without a show of popular or constitutional sanction.—On the whole, the people knew very well, that if they adopted this Constitution, they would be in a worse position to assert their rights, than they were, under the Charter. As its framing, both in the manner and matter of it, was an insult to the people, so its rejection by them was a proof of their discrimination and foresight. "They saw the hook through the bait," and avoided it. In the language of a nervous writer—"After all, it was to be the LAND that was to govern, and not MAN. The free suffrage party were solemnly bound to reject that Constitution, and they would have been false to themselves and to their principles, if they had done otherwise." And he shows, by a detailed statement of particulars, how, ere long, the representation in the Senate, would have become as objectionable as under the Charter, and how "this landed majority in the Senate, could always prevent the passage of any Act for the amendment of the Constitution."

How provoking, that the people would not rivet their own fetters! That they would not give up their own Constitution for that of the landholders! They must be rebels and disorganizers, of course!

THE STATE CONSTITUTION—ITS MAJORITY ADOPTION.

Of the People's Constitution, we have heard no complaint, that could befit republican or Christian lips, except the insertion of the word "*white*," which, it was believed, would be stricken out by the people, as proposed. We will now attend to some objections that have been urged—not against the *character*, but against the *validity* of this Constitution.

It has been contended by *individuals*, (never by the Charter *Government*) that there is no evidence of its adoption by the *majority*.—This plea is evidently resorted to, as an after-thought—a mere pretext, to cover the *real* ground of objection—its republican features—its recognition of popular sovereignty—its adoption without leave of the Charter Assembly. Nevertheless, we will look at it. We have already noticed that the *Assembly* have never dared to inquire into the returns. That fact, of itself, should be decisive, unless it be pleaded that the Assembly planted themselves solely upon the position that no Constitution adopted without *their* sanction could be binding! If this be their ground, let them abide the issue *on* that ground, and let their *advocates* be as silent as *they* are, on the subject of the majority adoption.

But is it credible that a majority of the people, who are disfranchised, did not vote in favor of a Constitution that recognized their rights—and at a time, too, when they had every reason to believe that no Constitution would be offered by the landholders' Convention, that would not contain the property qualification of $500? A condition which would still disfranchise a great portion of them?

If it be said that very many of them possess this property qualification, and *therefore* were not in favor of the Constitution—and if to this plea be added the very novel estimate of Mr. A.C. Barstow, that a majority of the people are landholders, and that *therefore*, they could not be supposed to be in favor of the People's Constitution—how, we demand, does this duplicate plea agree with the *other* very novel discovery of Mr. Barstow and others, viz., that the people of the State are almost unanimously in favor of free suffrage, and have been, from the beginning of the present difficulties?

It is remarkable that President Wayland and others, who have labored to create a suspicion or doubt on this majority question, have labored likewise to prove that the expressed will of the majority is not binding, and that such a principle would be despotic in its nature!—Mr. Barstow says explicitly—"If it [the Constitution] *was* voted for, by a majority of the male citizens, still it can not be the fundamental law of the land." And Dr. Wayland says that in such a despotism of the majority "society would be worse than solitude." Why then do they seek to create a belief that this despotism of the majority is on *their* side? Why not stick to the old doctrine that the minority ought to govern?

But to the facts. The Committee of the People's Convention, by whom the returns were received and counted, reported "that as nearly as could be ascertained, the number of males in the State, over the age of twenty-one years, who could be voters under the People's Constitution, was 23,142; that 11,572 were a majority of that number, and that the People's Constitution was approved by 13,944, being a plurality of 4,756 and a majority of 2,372 votes." So that *more than three-fifths* of the whole number voted for the Constitution. Another calculation shows likewise, that the Constitution was adopted by a majority, even of the "*freemen*" under the Charter. Thus: The largest number of votes ever polled, under the Charter, was 8,662, a majority of whom would be 4,332. And the "returns" showed that 4,927 of the votes in favor of the Constitution were given by "freemen," (for *their* votes were separately registered) making a majority of freemen of nearly six hundred.

"Every challenge that was made, at the election, was received, and the votes excluded from the count. Every voter wrote his name on the face of his ticket, and these tickets are preserved for the scrutiny of the Charter Assembly, together with the registers kept of the persons voting." "As to any unfair dealings, or spurious votes, *the Assembly have never dared, though solicited by the liberal members, to make the inquiry.*" Where then, is the room for controversy?

To make an impression abroad, it has been objected that votes were given *by proxy*, that is, tickets, duly authenticated, were sent in by individuals not present in person. Also that the moderators of the town meetings were not put under oath. But in both these particulars, the people followed the customary usages, and even, in the case of voting by proxy, the statute laws of Rhode Island. For *what honest object*, then, are these objections trumpeted through the land? Especially when the number of proxy votes were so few that if they were all cast out, the result would not be materially varied?

An effort has been made to discredit the majority returns of the Convention, by alledging that, in a subsequent vote for Governor, *under* this Constitution, in April, there was not quite half as many votes as were claimed for the Constitution. But what does this prove?—There was an occasion for a rally on the vote for the adoption of the Constitution. But in the election of Governor, there was no opposing candidate, and why should the people rally in their strength?—The aristocratic minority would not, of course, vote, *under* the Constitution, the validity of which they denied, and were preparing, by force of arms, to overthrow. A ballot-box rally, therefore, was not needed, to meet them. The Charter Assembly, too, had passed a law, forbidding, on penalty of fines and imprisonment, the holding of meetings to vote under the People's Constitution, or standing as candidates; and declaring it *treason* to accept and "assume to exercise" any State office, under the Constitution! What can exceed the effrontery of men who can adopt measures like these, to keep the people from voting, and *then* claim that the diminished vote is an evidence of their having abandoned their object! And yet, after all, the State officers, under the Constitution were chosen by a vote of nearly 1,600 *more* than those under the old Charter!*

President Wayland, in his discourse, first repeats, and then, very adroitly, reverses the argument. After laboring to discredit the returns of the December vote, in favor of the Constitution, he turns a somerset, and bases an argument *on* the truthfulness of those returns, to prove that "more than one half" of those who voted for the Constitution in December, "*had abandoned*" it in April! For how did he know *that*, without assuming that the December returns were trustworthy? The honesty of this double argument is in keeping with the

* The votes for "the officers under this *Constitution*" are stated by President Wayland, to be 6,417. The *Charter Assembly*, as its proceedings are recorded in the Providence Journal of May 5, reported the vote for S. W. King, as Governor to be 4,864, and for the opposing candidate, T. F. Carpenter (a suffrage man who has since been arrested for treason) 2,211. Scattering, 3. This gives Gov. Dorr, by their own account, 1,553 more votes than S. W. King, whom the Charterists support as Governor of the State. And it shows that out of the 13,492 votes given for Governor, under *both* organizations, only 4,864, or a little more than one-third were given for the man who afterwards governed the State *by military law*, (!) while, by their own statements, 8,628 votes were cast for two candidates (Dorr and Carpenter) both of whom are charged with treason against the government of the 4,861 "*legitimates!*"

logic that assumes, (as his evidently does,) that the people *abandon* a Constitution, and thereby make it a nullity, by neglecting to rally a majority of their whole number (or as many as voted to *adopt* it,) at every election that takes place under it! And this from a learned teacher who deprecates "disorganization" and capricious and irregular change!

If any thing were needed to corroborate the returns of the votes, *such* efforts to get rid of them would be a sufficient guaranty of their correctness. Another corroboration of a main item, in the estimate of the Convention, is inadvertently furnished by another opponent.

Mr. Barstow's estimate of the number of persons in Rhode Island "entitled to vote in States where suffrage is most extended" is 22,000, or 1,142 *less* than the estimate of the People's Convention. This makes the majority in favor of the People's Constitution 571 *more* than *they* made it. For this unexpected service, from Mr. Barstow, the friends of the Constitution will be obliged. "Howbeit, *he* meant it not so, neither did his heart think so." *He* was intent on the accountable object of making out his new discovery that the horribly dangerous power of the majority, (as President Wayland hath it,) is in the hands of the landholders! This point, to his own satisfaction, he made out, by an additional stretch of his powers at *guessing*, which we need not examine. If he chooses to have it that, *with a majority of landholders*, the People's Constitution was adopted by a majority of 571 *more* votes than they ever claimed, we shall not labor to confute him.

And here we drop, for the present, the subject of the Constitution's majority adoption, with the obvious remark that *if the people had a right* to adopt a Constitution, without the sanction of the Charter Government, then they had a right to prescribe the *manner* of doing it, and of appointing the *officers* to do it—and *their report of the result is to be accredited* by all conscientious sticklers for "law and order," and for the "correct way of doing business." Otherwise there is an end to all decisions by majorities, and the fiction of Pres. Wayland, as applied to the Constitutionalists, becomes a reality in the case of himself and his partisans. If "individuals" may trample on a Constitution of the sovereign People, duly declared by their appointed officers to have been adopted, because they choose to doubt the correctness of the count, thus claiming for themselves "a majority ascertained by no forms of law," then indeed may they "overturn the whole fabric of existing institutions"—a work which, it would seem, they are determined to do.

CONSTITUTIONAL "LAW AND ORDER."

We come then, to the grave inquiry whether the Constitution of Rhode Island was adopted in conformity with "*law and order?*" Or whether, as is claimed by the Charter Government, it was a violation of "law and order" for the People to form a Constitution, without leave of the Charter Assembly—insomuch that the legality and validity of their Constitution is thereby destroyed.

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE—that corner stone of all our American Constitutions—that grand expositor and father of Constitutional law—that authenticated definition of "a republican form of government" and directory of "*the manner*" of establishing free institutions, according to fundamental "law and order"—is remarkably explicit, and direct to the point in hand.

All governments "derive their just powers *from the consent of the governed.*"—"*Whenever* any form of government becomes destructive of the ends for which it was instituted, *it is the right of the people* to alter, or to abolish it, and institute a new government."

TWENTY-FIVE STATE CONSTITUTIONS, in this Union, we might quote, to the same effect. And as to "THE MANNER," the Constitution of Vermont says—"The community hath an indubitable, inalienable, and indefeasible right, to reform or alter government, IN SUCH MANNER, *as shall be by that community, judged most conducive of the public weal.*" Pennsylvania says, "The people *at all times* have an inalienable, and indefeasible right to alter, reform, *or abolish* their government, IN SUCH MANNER as they think proper." Virginia says, "A *majority* of the community hath an indubitable, inalienable, and indefeasible right to reform, alter *or abolish* government, IN SUCH MANNER as shall be judged most conducive to the public weal." Every Constitution of Government in the American Union, (unless we quote the rejected landholders' Constitution of R. Island, from which it was carefully excluded!) contains in its Bill of Rights the assertion of the same principle.

We cite these specimens not merely as expressions of correct principles, but as authentic quotations of CONSTITUTIONAL "LAW AND ORDER" in America. Now for a few commentaries upon that "law and order."

WASHINGTON, in his Farewell Address, says:

"THE BASIS of our political systems is the RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE to MAKE and ALTER their form of government."

JUDGE WILSON, of Pennsylvania, one of the framers of the U. S. Constitution, says:—"The people may change the Constitutions, whenever, and HOWEVER they please. This is a right of which *no positive institutions* can ever deprive them." "In our governments, the supreme, absolute, incontrollable power remains in the people; as our Constitutions are superior to our legislature, so the people are superior to our Constitutions." [Judge Wilson's Works. Vol. III. page 292. 3d Philad. ed. 1804.] Again, the same writer says, the people have the "right of abolishing, altering or amending this Constitution, at whatever time, and in WHATEVER MANNER they may choose." [Vol. I. page 17.]

HAMILTON, who was never suspected of ultra democratic predilections, says: "The fabric of the American empire ought to rest on the solid basis of the *consent of the people.* The streams of national power ought to flow *immediately* from that pure, original fountain of all legitimate authority." [Federalist, No. 22.]

OTHERS.—But the time would fail us to quote MR. RAWLE, and Judges PATTERSON, IREDELL, MARSHALL and STORY, of the U. S. Supreme Court, the latter of whom says expressly, that the Declaration of Independence, which contains the doctrine, is not to be regarded merely as a practical fact, but "in a legal and Constitutional view of the matter, by courts of justice." [Story's Commentaries, pp. 198, 199.]

THE PULPIT—AS IT ONCE WAS.

The *clerical* expounders of "law and order" in R. Island, (who boast, by the bye, their neglect and contempt of political concernments,) may be properly reminded that their predecessors, of Revolutionary times, who devoted earnest attention to civil matters, held exactly opposite views, and confronted the British and high tory divines of the day, (the Waylands and Vintons and Tuckers of their times,) with the assertion of the same doctrines just quoted from our chief jurists and statesmen. They led the way, indeed, in shaping and promulgating the very doctrines now contended for by the Constitutionalists of Rhode Island, and on account of which they are proscribed as disorganizers.

PRESIDENT STILES, of Yale College, wrote a book in defense of the people's Judges, by whom Charles I. was deposed and sentenced to death; and abundantly maintains the doctrines against which President Wayland contends.

DR. EMMONS, though a Federalist of the old school, and jealous of the ultra democratic writers, both French and American, very clearly asserts the doctrine now in dispute:

"The highest, as well as the lowest civil rulers, under the gospel dispensation, derive all their authority from their fellow men, and not from God, [i. e. not by direct appointment,] and therefore those who *gave* them authority, may *take it away*, and refuse to obey them, when they make laws which are unscriptural, unjust, oppressive and tyrannical." [Emmons' Sermons, Vol. V. p. 439.] Of course, the people must judge for themselves.

In a sermon on "Obedience to Magistrates," under the administration of the elder Adams, of whom he was a zealous supporter, Dr. Emmons, nevertheless, carefully disclaims the doctrine now held by the Charterists of R. Island. He says:—

"Volumes have been written in favor of passive obedience and non-resistance* to the higher powers, and volumes have been written in opposition to this *absurd and detestable doctrine*." [Vol. II. p. 140.]

* This term was then used to designate—*not* the doctrine of the Quakers, nor the doctrine of Anti-Civil-Government—but the doctrine of the high tory party in England, who held the divine right of kings—or of existing governments, and denounced anathemas against popular sovereignty, as the Charterists of Rhode Island now do.

OTHER AUTHORITIES.

MADISON. After the Constitution of the United States had been framed and adopted, an objection, it seems, was raised, "in respect to the *powers* of the Convention." "It is asked," says Mr. Madison, "*by what authority* this bold and *radical innovation* was undertaken." And Mr. Madison devotes a paper to the question "whether the Convention were *authorized* to frame" it. No writer on the Constitution, and on American Constitutional law, is regarded as higher authority than Mr. Madison. Let us hear him:

"They [the members of the Convention] must have reflected that in all great changes of established governments, *forms* ought to give way to the *substance;* that a rigid adherence, in such cases, to the former, would render nominal and nugatory the *transcendent and precious right of the people* to abolish or alter this government, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Since it is impossible for the people spontaneously and universally to move in concert towards their object; and it is THEREFORE ESSENTIAL that such changes be instituted by some INFORMAL and UNAUTHORIZED *propositions*, made by some patriotic CITIZEN, or NUMBER of citizens. They must have recollected that it was by this *irregular and assumed* privilege of proposing to the people plans for their safety and happiness, that the States were *first* united against the danger with which they were threatened by their ancient government; that Committees and Congresses for concentrating their efforts, and defending their rights, and that *Conventions* were *elected* in the several States for establishing the Constitutions under which they are now governed. Nor could it have been forgotten, that no *ill timed scruples*, no zeal for adhering to *ordinary forms*, were ANY WHERE SEEN, except in *those who wished to indulge, under these masks, their secret enmity to the substance contended for.*" * * "They must have borne in mind, that as the plan to be framed and proposed, was to be submitted to the people themselves, the disapprobation of this SUPREME AUTHORITY would destroy it for ever; ITS APPROBATION BLOT OUT ALL ANTECEDENT ERRORS AND IRREGULARITIES." [Federalist, No. 40.]

If Mr. Madison had been writing a Review of "Dr. Wayland's Discourse on the Affairs of Rhode Island," he could not have hit the mark with greater precision.

But perhaps the Doctor and his friends would prefer quotations from some modern statesman, one whose views of "law and order" in R. Island, are more in accordance with their own. We will accommodate them, with pleasure.

HENRY CLAY, in his late speech at Lexington, Ky., touched upon Rhode Island affairs, and expressed great sympathy with the Charterists, and horror at the attempts of the Constitutionalists. Yet we will prove from this speech of Mr. Clay, that the Constitution of Rhode

Island was regularly and lawfully framed and adopted; that it is as valid and binding as any Constitution in the United States.

Mr. Clay concedes that the Rhode Island Constitution "being submitted to the People, an *apparent majority* voted for it." And, instead of stopping to question the count, he contends that "*the major part*" must not be permitted to govern! Why? Because it was contrary to "precedent?" No! He admitted that it *was according* to "precedent!" Was it because it was in violation of Constitutional law? This he does not pretend! Why then? Because the example, at the South, would tend to abolish slavery!

Yet Mr. Clay understands that the Constitution of R. Island was as regularly adopted as that of Michigan. This he admits, as well he may, for no leave was asked from Congress, or from any other body, by the people of Michigan, and they transacted the business less carefully and regularly than was done in Rhode Island. But then the people of Michigan should have known better than to assert popular sovereignty, at the hazard of the "peculiar institution." And Congress should have known better than to have permitted the precedent! Hear Mr. Clay:

"I do not deny that their population and condition, (in Michigan) entitled them to admission; but I insist that it should have been done in the regular and established mode."

And again,—"Did not the rebellion in Rhode Island find for its support, A PRECEDENT, established by the MAJORITY IN CONGRESS in the irregular admission of Territories as States, into the Union to which I have heretofore alluded?"

Yes! Mr. Clay! Doubtless it did, if you call "the movements of the Dorr party"—the Constitutionalists—a "rebellion." And since Congress has admitted Michigan, and thus conceded its Constitution to stand on the same legal footing with that of all the other States, it follows that neither Henry Clay, nor the Charterists of Rhode Island, nor President Tyler can wage war against the Rhode Island Constitution, without waging war with all the State Constitutions in the Union! This by Mr. Clay's own showing; and the supporters of "*peculiar* institutions"—Northern and Southern—would do well to count the cost, before they proceed much further.

SENATOR BUCHANAN, another modern statesman, never suspected of sympathy, either with Gov. Dorr or other "incendiary fanatics," advocated in the Senate, the claims of Michigan for admission. In doing this, he vindicated the Michigan Constitution by just such arguments as those by which Mr. Madison defended the Constitution of the United States—the same used lately, by Mr. Cowell, in defending the Constitution of Rhode Island—an act, for which, by the bye, we understand, he was threatened with prosecution for treason, and has left the State, to escape arrest, by the Charterists!

Our witnesses, then, to the validity of the Rhode Island Constitution, (if any of our American Constitutions are valid,) are these, viz. the Declaration of Independence, the Constitutions of the United

States, and of all the several States, with their Bills of Rights, as expounded by Washington, Wilson, Hamilton, Madison, Rawle, Patterson, Iredell, Marshall, Story; in accordance with the ethics of the American divines of the Revolutionary age; Stiles, Emmons, and their cotemporaries. Among the moderns, Clay, Buchanan, and the "majority of Congress" that admitted Michigan.

If these witnesses are trust-worthy, then those, if there are such in Rhode Island, who forcibly resist the authorities of that State, under the Constitution of December, 1841, are insurgents, and revolutionists, legally as well as morally, at open war with the "BASIS of all our political systems." Whether such facts have occurred, and if so, what shape they have assumed, will appear as we proceed. But it is important, in the mean time, to carry along with us, a remembrance of the great principles of American Constitutional law, just exhibited, and to remember that, not only as a historical fact, but also "in a legal and Constitutional view of the matter by courts of justice"—(according to Judge Story) the Declaration of Independence has established *these* principles of "law and order" *in the place* of those that prevailed under the British Crown, and which may be claimed under the "Charters." Much as the Waylands of Rhode Island may regret the *fact* of the change, it has nevertheless taken place, and the fact is a *legal* fact. The "powers that be"—in this country, according to their *own* use of the phrase, are the sovereign People—the oath to support the Constitution of the United States, is an oath to support *that* sovereignty—so that, *by their own principles*, their State officers can not rebel against the Constitution of Rhode Island, without a violation of their oaths—and (according to *their* expositions of Paul and of Peter,) bringing down their own anathemas upon their own heads. So that they must change their *principles* before they can justify their *practice*.

"THE LUST OF OFFICE"—"THE RAGE OF POLITICAL AMBITION."
Wayland.

There was a session of the old Charter Assembly in March 1842. It contained some members who were in favor of a free government, and they exerted themselves to bring the Assembly to adopt just measures. The Assembly were reminded that the popular will had been *twice* expressed—once in favor of the free suffrage Constitution, and again in the rejection of the Constitution prepared by the "freemen's" Convention, under their authority. With the hope of terminating the unhappy dissensions of the State, and averting the calamities of a civil war, the following propositions, through these liberal members, were distinctly and successively made, and each, in turn, promptly and contemptuously rejected; viz:

1. A Bill was introduced, to conform the general election to the provisions of the adopted Constitution. By passing this Bill, the Assembly could have given all the sanction of their needful authority (if *that* were the thing wanting) to make the People's Constitution orderly and valid. *But the Bill was rejected.*

2. Another Bill was then introduced to submit the People's Constitution, that had already been once adopted, to the test of a *new* ordeal by the people, so that the town meetings should be held, and the counts and returns made, under direction of the Charter Assembly, and its "authorized" and "duly qualified officers." This would obviate all the difficulty alledged to have arisen from the declaration of "a majority ascertained by no forms of law." And to make the Bill more acceptable to the Assembly, it was provided that the constituency to be called upon to vote on the adoption of this Constitution, should be the same who would have been qualified to vote under the rejected Constitution of the freeholders. This would meet the current objection that the People's Constitution had been adopted by the votes of aliens, who had not been, for a proper time, resident in the State. *But this Bill, too, was rejected!*

The adoption of *either* of the preceding Bills would have terminated the controversy, and in a manner sufficiently courteous, one would think, to the ruling minority dynasty, under the Charter. But *both* attempts failed. Other expedients were nevertheless tried.

3. A proposition was made for an extension of the suffrage by Act of Assembly. This was asking them to exercise the very power over the suffrage that they held by the Charter, and without relinquishing that power. In complying with it, they would still have preserved their Charter authority over the whole subject. Whether this would have satisfied the people or no, they could have tried the experiment. And they could have given some evidence of the sincerity of their professions of willingness that the franchise should be extended, if it could only be done in the proper *manner*, and by competent *authority.—But the proposition was repulsed!* One more proposition remained, viz:

4. At the adjourned meeting of the same Charter Assembly in April, a proposal was made to call another Convention, whose delegates should be chosen by a constituency only a little larger than that which existed under the old laws. *But in vain!* Not one single movement would they make in favor of the disfranchised.

How and why was all this? Why refuse now, what would seem, at first glance, to be a smaller concession to popular freedom than was accorded in the rejected Constitution of the landholders?

The answer is at hand. They had so adroitly adjusted the details of that Constitution, (as already shown,) that the apparent extension of the suffrage would avail the people nothing, but to bind their fetters the closer. It did not give them the independent power of the ballot-box, nor destroy the caste of the freeholders, nor secure the benefits of trial by jury, nor properly limit the power of the legislature, nor provide for the extension of the suffrage, by a popular vote, to the colored people, nor terminate the sure reign of the aristocratic minority; but on the other hand, it would have confirmed and perpetuated all these abuses by a vote of the people, putting all future amendments of the Constitution out of their hands, and placing it in the power of the

minority. If the people would have accepted the suffrage as a franchise, as a privilege, and on these prescribed terms, they might have had it. But *this* they had refused, and therefore the Assembly would now grant them nothing at all—nor concede an inch, to prevent a popular commotion!

FORBEARANCE—FACTS VERSUS PRETENSIONS.

Now mark! It was not until all these pacific overtures had been made and rejected, that the people went forward under their Constitution, adopted in December, and elected their State officers, with Gov. Dorr at their head, on Monday, April 18th, 1842. They waited, in the hope that something would be conceded by the minority.

What a comment have we here, in these naked facts, upon the pretense lately made, that every body almost, in R. Island, including the members of the Charter Government, were ready, all along, to extend the franchise, and that they only objected to its being done in an irregular, unlawful and unauthorized manner! How remarkably did they fulfil the prophecy (so to speak) of President Madison, when he said, (as already quoted,) that "no ill-timed scruples, no zeal for adhering to ordinary forms, *were any where seen*, except in those who wished to indulge, *under these masks*, their secret enmity to the SUBSTANCE CONTENDED FOR"!

Turn we now to the Letter of Mr. A. C. Barstow, in the Emancipator of June 9th, and hear him gravely affirm—"The question at issue here is, *not* whether we shall have a written Constitution—an extension of suffrage—or an equalized representation. The question is as to the *manner* in which these blessings shall be secured—a large majority of all parties being in favor of the *things* themselves." And again, in the same paper of July 21st, hear him say:—"After the prayer of their petition to the Legislature was answered," [*when?* how?] "the Suffrage Association, as though bent on mischief, determined to steal a march on the legal authorities, called a Convention themselves." Thus charging on them a disposition to quarrel with the Charter Government, though it was ready to answer and to grant in a proper manner, all their reasonable requests! What do people mean by such representations?

If Mr. Barstow means to affirm, on the strength of the December vote, adopting the People's Constitution, that a large majority of the people, of all parties, are in favor of those *objects*, let him say so, and admit too, that they are in favor of the *manner* in which it was done. Let him *guess*, if he can, (since his powers seem adapted to that service,) what *other* mode or manner of securing their rights, peacefully, this majority could have adopted, with any prospect of success. But we resume the narrative.

THE "ALGERINE LAW."

Though the Charter Assembly of April 1842 could take no measures, in *any* direction, in favor of "those blessings" which, as Mr. Barstow himself attests to us, were desired by "a large majority of

all parties," they were nevertheless, at no loss to find out something connected with passing occurrences, to which they could direct their legislative attention—they could transcend all the powers they had ever held, even under the Charter of Charles II.—they could enact a law too despotic to be described by a British monarch as being "not repugnant to the laws of this our realm of England"—in order to prevent "a large majority" of the sovereign people from securing "those blessings," in conformity to American Constitutional law, viz. "in *such* MANNER *as they thought proper.*"

Up to November 1841, they had "always looked upon" the suffrage movement as a "FARCE"! They "took no notice of it." They thought it "really doubtful whether any change was actually desired by any large number of the citizens." The "petitions never seemed to arise from any strong feeling, nor to assume a form that called for immediate action." But *now*, the Constitution prepared in November had been adopted by the people, and they found it was *no "farce."* *Now*, therefore, there became, in their view, evidence of "*strong feeling*"—aye, and strong feeling, too, by "a large number of citizens"—yes! 13,944 of them! A "large majority of all parties," as Mr. Barstow hath it. (For it was, we presume, by no other "forms of law," that Mr. Barstow's "large majority" was "ascertained"!) *Now*, therefore, the Charter Assembly found it compatible with its dignity to "take notice of it." *Now*, at length, the movement had "assumed a form that called for immediate action"! And what action was it? A force-law and resolutions for the *suppression* (not the *support*) of the People's Constitution! *A law prohibiting the holding of elections, and declaring it* HIGH TREASON *against the State, to accept any office at the hands of the* PEOPLE!

The Charter Assembly, in February, had denounced the *People's Constitution*, with the evident intention of forcing them to accept the *landholders'* Constitution, on the alternative of obtaining that or none. But the people, with this threat over them, had nevertheless rejected it. And now it was declared treason to accept an office under the People's. A more palpable and direct denial of the people's sovereignty can not be imagined.

CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT ORGANIZED.—GOV. DORR.

And now, in the month of April, 1842, under this interdict of treason from the minority, (who were closely approaching to treasonable action themselves, unless popular sovereignty be "a farce,") the majority proceeded to the business of the State election. Was it a marvel that under such an interdict from the party in power, that many of the suffrage men were overawed—that they absented themselves from the polls—that numbers who had been prominent among them declined standing as candidates for office, and especially for the office of Governor? And what a comment have we here upon the pretense that the diminished vote, at this election, discredits the majority adoption of the People's Constitution in December! And that

too, when the April vote of the Constitutionalists, even in these circumstances and without an opposing candidate, was nearly 1,600 more than the vote for the Charter Governor! What can match the effrontery of men who can first hold the halter and the prison before the people, *in terrorem*, and then claim the diminished vote as an evidence of their free and deliberate abandonment of their cause—evidence of their minority, too, when they show a majority of nearly 1,600 over their opponents! What reliance can the community place upon the representations of such men?

The Constitutional Government was regularly and peaceably organized, by the election of State officers, in April 1842. As no opposing candidates were set up, there can be no doubt of the legality of their election. The Governor elected was THOMAS W. DORR, Esq., son of Sullivan Dorr, who is recognized as one of the substantial inhabitants of that city—a gentleman of high respectability and of wealth, and altogether loyal, even at the present time, to the Old Charter authorities of the State. Young Mr. Dorr was a popular member of the State Legislature at the time of the attempts made by Mr. Hazard and others, in 1835–6, to procure legal enactments against abolitionists, in accordance with the Southern demands. Quite unexpectedly to many of his friends, and much to the annoyance and disgust of some of them, Mr. Dorr threw himself suddenly and with great power and effect, into the opening breach, on that memorable occasion. With a clearness of argument and force of eloquence seldom exceeded, and aided by George Curtis, Esq. another member from Providence, he succeeded in holding the Hazard party in check, and in finally defeating their plans.

For this disorganizing and almost treasonable act, as it was deemed, Mr. Dorr received, of course, the customary measure of aristocratic abuse. He had disgraced his high parentage and his kin. He had betrayed the high trust of city interests, committed to his charge. Thenceforward, he was an ultra—a radical—an incendiary—a leveler—an agrarian,—in the cant vocabulary of the day. Thenceforward he was a "marked man."

The manly independence of his course, it is true, at a time when most of his supporters were exceedingly mad against the abolitionists, could scarcely fail to command the respect even of his more intelligent opponents; and the brilliancy of his talents, the respectability of his connections, and his rising political influence, held at bay, for the moment, very many who have greedily availed themselves, since, of the first convenient opportunity to vent upon him their long cherished spite.

Mr. Dorr committed another legislative offense against the monied aristocracy, about the same time, for which he has never been forgiven. He succeeded, to their great chagrin, in procuring a repeal of that unequal law by which the Banks were enabled to push the summary collection of their debts, by a process which other creditors could not use, and which enabled them to fleece a debtor before he could either

extricate himself by obtaining relief elsewhere, or take measures for dividing equitably, among the creditors, his effects. This was a "*pillage and plunder*" deserving retribution at their hands; and, accordingly, no Bank cashier, teller, or clerk, whatever might be his own private views, could retain his station, if he lent any countenance to the "agrarian disorganizer, Dorr"!

To all these offenses, Mr. Dorr had added, at an early day, the crime of becoming a member of the Executive Committee of the Rhode Island State Anti-Slavery Society, and notwithstanding the insinuations of Mr. Barstow, we have occasion to know that among the earliest and most tried and consistent friends of the cause in Rhode Island, Mr. Dorr is still regarded as having been at least on a par with his associates in devotion and fidelity to the cause. That he or they were, in all respects, consistent, in the election of 1840, is more than we are able to affirm.

It was not unnatural that such a man should be an early and uncompromising advocate of the free suffrage movement in R. Island, scouted and derided as it has been, equally with the Anti-Slavery cause, by the leading politicians of the State, and considered as a "farce" undeserving legislative "notice," up to the hour that the evidence of "strong feeling" in its favor had proved it to be "treason." Great efforts have therefore been made to create the impression that Mr. Dorr was the ambitious and aspiring agitator of the whole movement, and that he was bent on placing himself, at all events and at all hazards of the public peace, in the gubernatorial chair of Rhode Island. We have the best authority for saying that "nothing could be more untrue. He was never talked of for Governor, until several others declined, and then reluctantly allowed his name to be used. Perhaps," continues our informant, "there is not a man in the city whose moral character would stand the test as his has, and he has shown himself to be a man of superior abilities. I think God is preparing him to act no unimportant part in the world. You can hardly imagine what mortal hatred exists against him. It is said there are many who would shoot him if they had a chance."

That the Chief Magistracy of Rhode Island should be counted so high a prize by a man of the talents and standing in society of Mr. Dorr, that he should be willing to run the risk of private assassination or of public conviction for high treason, to obtain it, and amid scenes of carnage, seems a little paradoxical; especially when a little compliance and compromise of the people's rights, on his part, would secure the favor of the aristocracy, who would be ready to reward him with any office in their power. Yet, no less a man than President Wayland could pen the sentence that follows—"So dire is the lust of office, so blind the rage of political ambition, that I fear there are men among us who look at nothing as crime which will put them at the head of the strongest." Had he said this of Samuel W. King, the Governor of the Charter Minority, a man enlisted in such a cause as his, and urging it at the expense of the first principles of American

Constitutional law—"THE BASIS" (as Washington affirmed) "of our political systems," there might have been something more intelligible in the statement. As it is, we can only conclude that the President of Brown University considers a contest for man's inalienable rights too great a "farce" to elicit any "strong feeling," or to prompt to any hazardous service—and that "the lust of office" is the only motive that could be a sufficient *cause* of such an *effect*. It is to be lamented greatly that his associations should have been such as to have given him no conceptions of the possibility of a higher motive of political action in times that try men's souls.

The great merits of the controversy, we know, are not to be tested by minor circumstances like these. But since, (to give another direction to the words of President Wayland) "the movement" [of the Charterists] "has been fostered and sustained by a series of most astonishing falsehoods"—it is but a necessary act of justice that the particulars should be known.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL ASSEMBLY.

The State Officers and Legislature, under the Constitution, having been chosen by the people, the first session was held at Providence, and the Message of Gov. Dorr was delivered, the 3d of May. The document is before us, and it is one which would do honor to any State in the Union. Nothing of the kind, or comparable with it for statesmanship and dignity has ever before emanated from a Governor of Rhode Island. (Seldom indeed, if ever, has any thing deserving the name or taking the form of a Message been communicated on the opening of their sessions.) It recapitulates the past and recent history of the State with great perspicuity, and argues the great principles involved with much force and clearness. Its decorous and courteous bearing towards the Old Charter Governor, the minority Assembly and the opposers of the Constitution, by whom he was wrongfully charged with high treason, while they were the insurgents against Constitutional "law and order" themselves, will for ever remain an imperishable monument of his magnanimity, contrasting, as it does, with the low vituperation and abuse, with which he was constantly assailed. The Providence Journal of May 5th is so stupid as to deride it, and (fortunately for posterity) describes it as "nothing but a patchwork of his own speeches and the articles in the New Age on the Sovereignty of the People"—"in the regular style of the Town House orators"—the "speeches of Mr. Parmenter," &c. &c. The future readers of the Message will therefore have the benefit of the Journal's testimony that the so-called "agrarian" and "disorganizing" meetings and speeches alluded to, were of the same character as the Message of Gov. Dorr, of which they can judge for themselves.

As the State House was held and guarded by the adherents of the Old Charter, the People's Legislature peacefully met in a large building commonly occupied as a foundry, and the circumstance furnished additional matter of derision in the prints of the aristocracy, with

whom the apparent connection between mechanical labor and legislation became fresh proof that popular sovereignty was "farce" and "treason" combined! *Legislation in a "foundry!"* What further witness did they need, that Dorr was a traitor, that his adherents were "a low rabble"—the "fag end of society"*—seeking "a division of property"—ready to "seize upon the government, and subject the city to pillage and plunder"†—impelled by the "lust of office" to places of power, through scenes of carnage—that "disorganization" was their object, "anarchy" their creed, and their watchword "revenge!"

But what proof did Gov. Dorr, and the People's Legislature, exhibit, of these tendencies? Were they found in the following?

EXTRACTS FROM GOV. DORR'S MESSAGE.

"Your attention will be required to the force law and Resolutions recently adopted by the General Assembly, for the suppression of the Constitution. Laws like these, which violate, in some of their provisions, the well known privileges enjoyed by the subjects of the British Monarchy, could hardly find favor in the land of Roger Williams. These enactments have been regarded by the considerate men among our opponents as most impolitic and unjust, and by the people as null and void, because conflicting with the paramount provisions of the Constitution.—Military preparations have been made by direction of the Assembly, and the people have been consequently put on the defensive. But this is not the age nor the country, in which the will of the people can be overawed or defeated by measures like these," *

* * * * * *

"We are assembled in pursuance of the Constitution, and under a sacred obligation to carry its provisions into effect. Knowing the spirit which you have manifested throughout this exciting controversy, the moderate but detemined course which you have pursued, your love of order, and respect for all Constitutional laws, and for the rights of all other persons, while engaged in the acquisition of your own, I hardly need remind you of your duty to cast behind you all injuries and provocations, and leave them to the retributive justice of public opinion, which will ultimately appreciate every sincere sacrifice to the cause of truth, of freedom, and of humanity. Entertaining the deep and earnest consideration that we are engaged in such a cause, and conscious of our own imperfections, let us implore the favor of that GRACIOUS PROVIDENCE *which guided the steps of our ancestors*, upon this our attempt to restore and permanently secure the blessings of that well ordered and rational freedom here established by the patriotic founders of our State.

"The provisions of the Constitution relating to the security of the right of suffrage against fraud, and to the registration of voters, will require your immediate action. The State demands of its gov-

* Vide Providence Journal. † Wayland's Discourse.

ernment an economical administration of affairs, and will justly complain of any increase of its expenses, at the present period.

"I can not more appropriately conclude this communication than in the words of the Constitution, which declares that no favor or disfavor ought to be shown toward any man, or party, or society, or religious denomination. The laws should be made, not for the good of the few, but of the many, and the burdens of the State ought to be fairly distributed among its citizens."

THOMAS W. DORR.

PROVIDENCE, R. I. May 3, 1842.

Our readers, we can assure them, are now in possession of a fair specimen of the tone and temper of the Message. If these extracts are not inflammatory, disorganizing, incendiary, and treasonable, the Message contains nothing that can be justly obnoxious to those charges.

THE CONTRAST—PROSPECTS OF "PILLAGE!"

Let it be borne in mind, now, that this Message was delivered by Gov. Dorr, under the full and well grounded conviction that he was the legally elected Governor of the State, under a Constitution regularly framed and adopted by a great majority of the people, who, until now, had been wickedly deprived of their just rights, that the entire movement on their part and his own, had been an orderly and peaceful restoration of those rights—that the action of the old Charter Assembly was legally and Constitutionally as well as morally null and void—that they were a minority of insurgents against the State, who had undertaken to put down the People's Constitution and the lawful Government by intimidation and force, and thus perpetuate their despotic usurpation and the abuses which, up to their April session, they had stubbornly refused either to remove or to abate—that he, himself, was the special object of their vindictive hate, that he was at that moment, under their treasonable interdict of treason, for no crime or fault but his fidelity to liberty, human rights, the sovereignty of the people, and the fundamental principles and time honored maxims of American Constitutional "law and order," as repeatedly expounded by the Washingtons, the Jeffersons, the Madisons, and all the principal jurists and statesmen of the republic, and as essentially acted out in the adoption of all our National and State Constitutions, particularly in the case of Michigan, so recently sanctioned by our Congress and President—let all these considerations be borne in mind, and then contrast the Message of Gov. Dorr with the language and the actions of his opponents.

Instead of recommending a retaliatory proclamation and interdict of treason, he simply recommends a repeal, by the legitimate authorities, of their unauthorized and unjust legislation, a measure rendered necessary by the fact that under the recently adopted Constitution, all the laws of the Old Charter Assembly remained in force until regularly repealed by the Constitutional Assembly—(another comment, by the bye, upon the alledged revolutionary, and disorganizing, and

reckless "movements of the Dorr party.") Instead of exciting to revenge and pillage, he exhorts the people to "cast behind them all injuries and provocations." So far from arrogating to himself and his party the attributes of infallibility and exclusive right to govern—instead of branding his opponents with opprobrious epithets, instead of deriding them as "the fag end of society," and charging them with incendiary designs, he speaks of himself and his associates as "conscious of their own imperfections." Instead of "urging men to pillage and murder"—instead of hinting at "a division of property"—as President Wayland would lead us to infer the leaders of the party had done, we have a citation, from the Constitution, of the maxims of rigid impartiality, equal legislation, laws for the good of the many, not the few, irrespective of sect, association or party—and a fair distribution of the State burdens among the citizens.

WHAT THE ARISTOCRACY MEAN BY "PLUNDER."

Are *these* the exhortations and maxims, which, when they fall on the ears of a hitherto privileged caste, with whom the monopoly of power has come to be regarded as a sacred and inviolable vested right, remind them instantly of "pillage and plunder"—a "division of property," and "the overthrow of the lawful government?"

So it would seem! For the Editor of the Providence Journal is horrified at Gov. Dorr's Message. He sees in it nothing but a harsh and grating repetition of the current treason—a new edition of "Town House speeches," and of the lectures of "Mr. Parmenter." And we know that, in Rhode Island, those speeches and lectures are currently represented as being of the same character described in the above extracts from President Wayland. The very words he uses are those bandied about the city, as descriptive of those meetings. And it has been well remarked of Wayland's Discourse, that its facts and principles, its arguments, and even its phrases, are evidently taken, at random, from the parlors of his city patrons and friends.

PROOFS OF "PILLAGE" AND "INFIDELITY."

But perhaps it may be asked whether there was not some radical *defect* or startling *heresy* in the CONSTITUTION which had been adopted, and which justified the charge of "pillage and plunder"—"division of property"—leveling—agrarianism—atheism—infidelity—anarchy—insecurity of rights—contempt of "venerable laws and usages,"* &c. &c. of which such loud outcry, from the pulpit and the press, has been sent forth, over the land. Let us examine. For the sake of convenience, in comparing, we will place the paragraphs, (so far as we can find them,) recognizing the Divine Government, the binding authority of the Divine will, the inalienable tenure of human rights, including the rights of property, &c. side by side, and see how they compare.

---

* Vide Dr. Tucker's Discourse, p. 14.

THE SUFFRAGE CONSTITUTION.

Adopted, Dec. 1841.

PREAMBLE. "We the people of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, *grateful to* ALMIGHTY GOD, for his blessing vouchsafed to the 'lively experiment' of religious and political freedom 'held forth' by our *venerated ancestors*, and earnestly imploring the favor of HIS GRACIOUS PROVIDENCE toward this our attempt to secure, upon a *permanent foundation*, the advantages of well-ordered and rational liberty, and to enlarge and transmit *to our successors* the inheritance that we have received, do ordain and establish the following Constitution, for the government of the State."

"ARTICLE I. *Declaration of principles and rights.*

1. "In the spirit and words of ROGER WILLIAMS, the illustrious founder of this State, and of his venerated associates, we declare 'that this government shall be a DEMOCRACY, or government of the people,' by the 'major consent of the same,' 'ONLY IN CIVIL THINGS.' The will of the people shall be expressed by representatives freely chosen, and returning at fixed periods to their constituents. This State shall be, and for ever remain, as in the design of its founder, sacred to 'SOUL LIBERTY,' to the rights of conscience, to freedom of thought, of expression, and action, as hereinafter set forth and secured."

2. "All men are created free and equal, and are endowed by their Creator with certain natural, inherent, and inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, *the acquisition of property*, and the pursuit of happiness. Government can not create or bestow these rights, *which are the gift of God*, but it is instituted for the stronger and surer defense of the same, that men may safely enjoy the rights of life and liberty, and *securely possess and* TRANSMIT *property*, and, so far as laws avail, may be successful in the pursuit of happiness."

[Unusual, if not unprecedented care is here taken to specify the "*acquisition*," the *possession*, and the *transmission* of *property*, as among the inviola-

THE LANDHOLDER'S CONSTITUTION.

Rejected, March 1842.

PREAMBLE. "We the people of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, do ordain and establish this Constitution, for the government thereof."

[Significant brevity!

Here is no recognition of God, no gratitude expressed for the blessings of religious and political freedom—no supplication of divine favor on the present undertaking, nor on the future destinies of the State.]

"ARTICLE I. *Declaration of certain constitutional rights and principles.* In order effectually to secure the religious and political freedom established here by our venerated ancestors, and to preserve the same to *their posterity*, we do declare, that the inherent, essential and unquestionable rights and principles hereinafter mentioned, among others, shall be established, maintained and preserved, and shall be of paramount obligation, in all legislative, judicial and executive proceedings."

[No mention of "Roger Williams" nor of a "democracy"—nor of "government of the people"—nor "major consent"—nor of "soul liberty." "Certain *constitutional* rights" are to be enumerated, and they are to be secured to "*the posterity*" of "our venerated *ancestors*"! The "posterity" of *other* people are not mentioned!]

[In the landholders' Constitution, we have been unable to discover any recognition of the inherent, inalienable, God-given rights of man, or any thing that looks like it, unless it be what is copied above! There is nothing which recognizes those rights as "*the gift of God*"—and in strict consistency with this, there is nothing denying the right of civil government *to take them away!*—nothing affirming that the rights of property, or any other human rights, have any higher origin than the permission of government! And so the boasted conservators of "*property*"—it would seem, after all—could find no place, in *their* Constitution, to recognize the "natural, inherent, inalienable

ble rights of men, which civil government can not create, or destroy, but only protect! Strange anarchists and levelers, these! Remarkable symptoms of "pillage and plunder!"]

right" to the "*acquisition of property*" —"to securely *possess* and *transmit* property"!!! And how could they, without a recognition of those inalienable, God-given rights, against which they were contending?]

3. "All political power and sovereignty are originally vested in, and, of right, belong to the PEOPLE. All free governments are founded in their authority, and are established for the greatest good of the whole number. THE PEOPLE have, therefore, an inalienable and indefeasible right, in their original, sovereign, and unlimited capacity, to ordain and institute government, and, in the same capacity, to alter, reform, or totally change the same, whenever their safety or happiness requires."

[The landholders' Constitution contains no recognition of the sovereignty of the people, except what is implied in the above Preamble—"We the people," etc., and which they could not easily avoid using.—This accords with that feature of the Constitution, which almost, if not wholly, puts its amendment out of the power of the people. And very plainly, a recognition of the right of the people to make and change their government, would have been a relinquishment of their controversy with the Constitutionalists.]

4. "No favor or disfavor ought to be shown in legislation, to any man, or party, or society, or religious denomination. The laws should be made, not for the good of the few, but of the many, and the burdens of the State ought to be fairly distributed among its citizens."

[In the landholders' Constitution we find nothing corresponding to the 4th section of the Suffrage Constitution—opposite.* Perhaps they thought of the Old Charter "party"—of "the few" that they intended should govern—or perhaps they remembered that above half the real estate in R. Island would have fallen into the hands of the Banks before now, had it not been for the principles of equality and anti-monopoly squinted at in the Suffrage Constitution, drawn up (peradventure) by the "destructive" Thomas W. Dorr, whose assertion of the same principles had shorn the Banks of their exorbitant power.]

5. "The diffusion of useful knowledge and the cultivation of a SOUND MORALITY, IN THE FEAR OF GOD, being of the first importance, in a Republican State, and indispensable to the maintenance of its liberties, it shall be the imperative duty of the Legislature to promote the establishment of free schools, and to assist in the support of public education."

"OF EDUCATION. *Section* 1. The diffusion of knowledge, as well as VIRTUE, among the people, being essential for the preservation of their rights and liberties, it shall be the duty of the General Assembly," etc. etc.

[Here, instead of the definite and rigid term "SOUND MORALITY," which might squint significantly at 'te-totalism,' 'moral reform,' and other radical fanaticisms of the times, we have only the graceful and vague term "VIRTUE," to which an ancient heathen or a modern bacchanalian would not strenuously object—and nothing at all is said of "THE FEAR OF GOD," which is the "beginning of wisdom."]

* Perhaps the clause prohibiting *lotteries* will be pleaded as an exception, as they are notoriously for the benefit of "the few, and not of the many." But this

A declaration of the *People's* Constitution concerning religious liberty is copied, almost or quite verbatim, into the *landholder's* Constitution, with only the omission of this very guarded and careful termination of the *People's*, viz. "and that all *other* religious rights and privileges of the people of this State, *as now enjoyed*, shall remain inviolate and inviolable." This was a sufficient guaranty, one would think, of all the rights and privileges of the Rev. Dr. Tucker and his friends, who were horrified, it seems, at the prospect that, under this Constitution, they should become "hewers of wood and drawers of water!" How it happened that the landholders *omitted* this guaranty in *their* Constitution, we are not informed.

In only one place, in the *landholders'* Constitution have we discovered the name of God. And this is in the clause concerning religious liberty, as copied from the People's. It was in a position where it could not well be omitted—"Whereas, Almighty God hath created the mind free," &c.

The People's Constitution provided that none but tax payers should vote on the question of taxation or expenditures, or hold the office of Mayor, Alderman, or Common Council-man in cities. This was copied, essentially, into the landholders' Constitution.

It should be remembered that the People's Constitution was framed in November, and adopted by the people in December; whereas the landholders' was not framed in Convention till February, and rejected by the people in March. So that the landholder's Constitution was drawn up and deliberated upon by those who had, no doubt, the People's Constitution before them, and it is evident that the landholders took no small pains, both in shaping and recommending THEIR Constitution, to make the people believe that the difference between the two Constitutions was *trifling*. The boast that they did this, is continued to the present time.

The differences between them, as above exhibited, therefore, as well as in the points previously specified, *were not accidental*. And the variations *were not made, without reasons*, of some sort.

A SUPPOSITION.

"*Indeed! says the lawyer, that alters the case!*"

Suppose now the case reversed. Suppose the *landholders* had published *their* Constitution in November, and suppose it had contained the same high tone of moral and religious sentiment, and the same careful recognition of human rights, including the *rights of property* that now characterizes the Constitution of the suffrage men. Suppose, next, that the suffrage party, with *that* Constitution before them, (and apparently adopted by 13,944 out of the 23,142 adult male citizens of Rhode Island) had held *their* Convention, in February, and

---

plea will only show more clearly the unwillingness of the landholder's Convention to copy that feature of the People's Constitution which forbids *all* monopolies and class legislation, standing, as they do, in this respect, on the same moral level with lotteries.

drafted a form of a Constitution, which should have differed from the former Constitution, just as that of the landholders now differs from that of the People! Dropping (except in one place, where they could not well get rid of it,) the very *name* of the Supreme Being, expressing to Him no gratitude for the past, imploring from Him no direction for the present, or protection for the future—striking out "the fear of God" from their definition of education—substituting the more indefinite word *virtue* for the puritanical term "*sound morality*"—blotting out all recognition of original human rights, and particularly the right of *acquiring, possessing, and transmitting property*—and declining to adopt the guaranty of "*all other* religious rights and privileges of the people of the State, as *now enjoyed.*"

Suppose all this had been done by the *suffrage* men, instead of the Charterists? Suppose they had made great exertions to get *their* Constitution adopted, instead of the *former* one. Suppose too, that having *failed* in that attempt—having admitted that *their* Constitution was rejected by the People, they should have refused obedience to the Government organized under the former Constitution adopted in December by the 13,944 citizens! Suppose they should have taken up arms to depose, imprison, and hang the Constitutional officers of the State!

The problem to be disposed of is—"Who would have been pronounced the infidels, the levelers, the agrarians, the disorganizers, the anarchists, the revolutionists, the insurrectionists, the traitors, *then?*" And if the Waylands, and Vintons, and Tuckers, and Barstows of R. Island could have pointed out *facts like these,* to prove the infidelity, and lawlessness, and felonious purposes of "pillage and plunder" which they now charge so freely on their opponents, would they not be placed before the American public in a much more favorable attitude to sustain their allegations, than they are at present?

A QUESTION OR TWO MORE.

How is it that our Watchmen on the walls of Zion, are so slow of vision to discern the signs of infidelity and lawlessness *where they are,* and so sharp sighted to discover them *where they are not?* Does a gift blind the eyes of the wise? Or shall we set it down as an axiom not to be questioned, that, in these latter days, unlike all the ages that have preceded it, the "poor of this world" who were once chosen to be "rich in faith," and the "common people" who were wont to hear the truth gladly, have, all at once, become the *only* rebels against that just and equitable "law and order" which *they* themselves most need, to protect them from the powerful? While the mighty, the rich, and the noble, the very classes whose robberies, and whose depredations upon the "rights of the poor of the people" compelled Moses and the prophets, Nehemiah and the reformers, Jesus Christ and his Apostles, to confront them with their statutes, their rebukes, their popular agitations,* and their terrible anathemas,† have become, (with all the

* Nehemiah v. 17. † Matt. xxiii. and James v.

characteristics which render it *almost* impossible for them to enter into the kingdom of heaven,*) the only persons capable of understanding and wielding civil government, and incapable of injustice or oppression—to oppose whom, is treason and disorganization, of course?

GATHERINGS OF THE PEOPLE. THE PROVIDENCE PROCESSION.

Will it be said that there had been any popular tumults and commotions that had indicated a propensity to "pillage and plunder?" The people, as already stated, has assembled in *large masses.* When assembled, had they committed the slightest depredation upon the property, or violence or outrage upon the persons of their fellow-citizens? Had this been the case, we should hardly expect to hear President Wayland expressing his impressions that they were not moved by "any strong feeling"! That immense Mass Convention, held in Providence, April 17th, 1841, that marched through the streets in the presence of the astonished merchants and literati of the metropolis—the longest procession—the mightiest gathering—aye, and the most quiet and orderly one, too,—the least tinctured with signs of intemperance or marks of uproarous levity or senseless display, that was ever witnessed in Rhode Island—what was it, we demand? And what was there about it that appeared like a disposition to commit outrages—to subject the citizens to pillage? Of whom was that procession composed? What their appearance, deportment, character and bearing? They were the industrious, hard-handed mechanics of the country and city—very many of them were members of churches, as Drs. Wayland and Tucker seem to understand—they were the sunburnt young farmers, especially the disfranchised younger brothers, arm in arm, whose older brothers, without even the show of an equivalent in the form of a mess of pottage, and without any bargain, had monopolized all their birthright of political freedom. There they were, as intelligent and as law-abiding as their older brothers. There they presented themselves, before the city aristocracy, who understood well enough their errand. They came to take peaceful and lawful measures for securing *their rights.* They came in their coarse but tidy butternut-colored homespun coats and pantaloons—their clean, though not exquisitely plaited, shirts—their honest and earnest sober faces beaming with intelligence;—they came, walking the earth erect, with their eyes upon the blue heavens, without the suspicion that either broadcloth or mahogany, lands or warranty deeds, were necessary to make them men—the equals of their own mother's children! The question is not whether Aristocratic Arrogancy had eyes to discover any moral sublimity in that mighty and peaceful gathering. It is not whether Flippant Foppery could deride it as "a farce," because it was not clothed in broadcloth. It is not whether Doctorated Dulness could descry in it "any strong feeling" until it transformed an University into a war barrack. The simple inquiry is, whether the pallid

* Luke xviii. 23.

face and the downcast eye that characterized the Charterists of Providence, that day, was occasioned by the insane and monomaniac dread of pillage and plunder, (as though men could seek political power for no other object,) or whether, with all their affected contempt, they were overawed with the withering consciousness that they saw an injured people preparing to exercise *their rights?*

And at those other gatherings of the people, at Newport, in May, and at Providence again, in July, 1841, and then, again, the spontaneous escort of Gov. Dorr, on his return from New York, in the spring of 1842—equaling, if not outnumbering all that wealth and artificial arrangement could muster, clergymen and all, to grace the triumphal procession of the Old Charter Pretender, King—what was there, we demand, that carried the air of disorder, and especially of a disposition to pillage? And who can be made to believe, without evidence, that the numerous suffrage men in Providence were willing to burn the city of their own residence, in order to revenge upon their brothers and neighbors, the members of the "same churches" and "business firms"*—that they were going to *burn* the houses, *first*, (as the representation has it,) and then parcel them out by lot, or otherwise, among themselves, *afterwards!* Is it the reputation of downright insanity, or of deep and determined hypocrisy that men seek, when they scatter abroad such absurd and truthless fabrications?

But the procession of Gov. Dorr, we may be reminded, was, in part, a procession of armed men—a military escort! And what then? Was this an unusual exhibition with the Governors of Rhode Island? Had not the *minority* Governor King just been parading with *his* military escort? Are we to infer the prospect of plunder (as President Wayland would, perhaps, insist,) from the horrible fact that the march of Gov. Dorr's escort was the march of the *dangerous majority?* Or is "plunder" *most* to be feared from a Governor under Constitutional restraints? and administering a Constitution that expressly recognises the right of property among *other* human rights? The world and posterity will judge how much weight should attach to the unsustained charges of a projected "pillage and plunder," brought against the supporters of Constitutional "law and order," by men who must needs screen themselves in some way, if possible, from the ignominy of having raised a lawless insurrection (as the world and posterity will know they have,) against the clearly asserted sovereignty of the People.

THE TACTICS AND THE TOOLS OF TYRANNY.

But this is not the first time that the advocates of liberty have been truthlessly charged with disorganizing and incendiary designs, and represented ready to cut their masters' throats—unless they are wronged! In no other way could popular sovereignty ever be put down and kept under. The bugbear of "*pillage and plunder*," ever and anon, is dressed up for public exhibition whenever "any large

* Vide Dr. Tucker.

number" of the people press their demands with "any strong feeling," and when the popular movement (no longer "a farce") "assumes a form that calls for immediate action." Aristocratic "action" in such cases is marvelously monotonous, and has been, as far back as human history and tradition carries us. "Law and Order" are duly and dutifully declared by the State doctors to be "in danger." Life and limb, and (more precious than all) PROPERTY, are pronounced insecure! And the proof is readily produced! Here are masses of *men*, [horrible!] and vulgar, common men, too, in "large numbers," who exhibit "strong feeling"! They ask their due share of political power! And would not this be "plunder"? So the State monopolist regards it. They seek a change in the laws, aye, and the power of assisting in making them, too. Does not this squint at a "division of property?" For what other purpose could such men wish to change or to make laws? Who, among a monied aristocracy, ever heard of any use for laws but to get and make money? Earthlings who never dreamed of any lawful authority but wealth, nor of any legislative object but "plunder," become the easy and willing dupes of the ambitious and designing. The cry of "*pillage and plunder*" multiplies and is re-echoed. The alarm reaches the nursery and the bedchamber. Matronly Affection is in tears, and Nervous Excitability in hysterics. The panic becomes epidemic, and doctors fatten upon fevers. Guilty Knavery, with its eye on its money-bags, is "in great fear where no fear *was*." Cheated Cupidity puts off its coward phiz and plucks up courage enough to shoulder a rusty musket rather than be robbed of its cankered silver. "Respectability and Standing," ever ready to mob down righteous liberty, are alarmed at the prospect of a riot, and become the conservators of "law and order." Miserly Money-Love and Spendthrift Prodigality come into close contact and becoming brotherhood, now. Shoulder to shoulder they are paraded and "dress to the right" or "left," just as Military Lordliness, with its epaulettes and plumes (strutting in stateliness or prancing prettily, the Grand Marshal of the day,) finds it graceful to give out the word of command.

But all must be done lawfully, and law expositors are not wanting. Partisan Pettifoggery, skilled in sophistry and profound in precedent, scents a cash client and a fat fee. Its honest shilling it must earn. So it puts on its spectacles, and becomes wise. The government that *has* reigned, and that *does* reign, it counts the "lawful government" of course, for possession is nine points of the law, and the tithe, as its name denotes, stands for the tenth, and that makes up the tally. So its declaration is soon filed, its argument summed up, its verdict recorded. The minority are the sovereign, the majority the subjects. Hoary abuse is lawful government, and Constitutional righteousness and liberty are treason. Stupidity listens, and is satisfied. Fashion espies where the "respectability" clusters, and lisps her silken assent. Mammon calculates the probable effect on the public stocks and the money-market. Bloated Wealth, from under its bulky bales, and

Satiety, at its table, gorged to excess, groan out in symphony their apoplectic approbation. Speculation, on tiptoe, signifies its horror at recklessness and lawlessness, by lending its trustworthy endorsement, and hastens on to the exchange or the auction. Sharp-sighted Thrift, from behind its counter or at its desk, 'mid delicious dreams of coming customers, its decisions turned by as small a weight of merchandise as its own avoirdupoise balances, and its soul eclipsed by a sixpence, finds no great difficulty in deciphering the merits of the case on its interest-board. And Servile Sycophancy, too, but yesterday from the kennel, aping its betters, and eager to earn a footing among the right honorables, does the dirty work of alternate aspersion and adulation for which it is constitutionally fitted.

Thus backed and supported, the Reigning Power reads the riot act, and commands Popular Sovereignty to disperse. The more timid comply, for men who love liberty and know their rights, are not always solicitous to be massacred or imprisoned, decapitated or hanged. But before (under all these embarrassments,) a people can be fully subjugated by an aristocratic minority, two other things must commonly be done—the aid of two other auxiliaries must be secured. Some princely despot, and a distant one is to be preferred, with a standing army, (that unfailing antidote to freedom,) must be induced to interfere. From such an armament, no sympathetic yearnings after liberty and humanity may be feared. Oppression is not more true to *itself* than is an organized military estalishment to *it*. The soldier of the standing army has become an exile from the family circle, an alien to the family of mankind. He has become a machine. He is enslaved, and worse than that—unlike the chattel slave of the plantation, he has commonly lost the conception and the appetency of freedom.

But besides and above all. One thing, more essential than even the military despot himself is needed. As all must be done *lawfully*, so all must be done *religiously*, too. For man will have a religion of some sort, nor can he wholly divest himself of the consciousness that even in his political acts, he must have the sanction of something that he can call, and that is called, a religion. Not least, then, in the bad procession, comes Priestly Imposture, in canonicals—with or without its surplice, as the fashion ecclesiastical may prescribe. With the abused and holy Book of benign but blasphemed Christianity in its sacrilegious hands, with its Satanic quotations of Scripture against its Author—arraying the letter against the spirit—the symbol against the thing signified—it craftily contrives to read "peace and safety" to oppressors, and denunciations to the oppressed. It consigns to perdition those who refuse to obey man rather than God. It exhorts the military minions of despotism to do their foul and bloody work, secure of the divine favor. It stands ready to chant its *Te Deums* and pronounce its apostolical benedictions, whenever the butchery is performed, and the subjugation completed. This does the work that nothing else earthly could do, and gives to all other despotic doings their sanctity and their power. Saintly Subtlety, in unity with its

Teacher, performs the pastoral office, and whenever the true worshipers assemble together, comes also among them. Too pious to meddle with State matters, save when its help is needed to crush freedom, it deprecates the "dirty waters of politics," and warns the brotherhood to stand aloof from them. Securing *their* confiding promise of neutrality, it steps complacently into the public procession of the oppressor, on whose side there is power. Pseudo Piety sympathizes with its pattern, and with its slippery faith pinned on clerical sleeves, glides from the altar to the armory, exchanges its Bible for a bayonet, surmounts its cannon with a crucifix, and mumbling its prayers, or thumbing its rosary, girds itself, secure of priestly indulgence and absolution, to the Pharaoh-like expedition of smothering in blood "the right of the poor of the people"—in the name of the "Prince of Peace"—the "Refuge of the oppressed"—and of burying itself in the depths of the Red Sea. Infidelity, with ghastly grin, feasts on the prospect, and plants itself on either side, or on both—where it can best corrupt Freedom or disgrace Christianity, or set them at suicidal warfare with each other. Surrounding communities that ought to snuff oppression in the breeze, and read their own coming doom in the daily Gazettes, are quieted by two twin ambassadors of Tyranny, ever present at their cabinets and altars:—these, namely; Worldly Wisdom, with Cain-like countenance, counseling non-interference with other people's concerns; and Spurious Spirituality, dreading contamination with the profaneness of politics. Seated between these, Carnal Security waves her magic scepter, and cries "peace, peace," when there is no peace—and so the world slumbers, and wears fetters.

Thus has liberty been smothered, and Christian Institutions pressed into the service of tyranny—thus (with few and brief exceptions, supplying the only breathing seasons of freedom) has religion been disgraced, its author insulted, humanity suffocated, and human rights crushed, from the days of Constantine to the present hour. Thus it is, and has been, in Europe. And thus it was, and is, in Rhode Island.

RECAPITULATION.—STAND-POINT.

We approach the winding up of the drama—or rather, of the Act of it that has already been performed. To understand it, we must bear in mind the facts we have now ascertained.

We have seen the just causes of discontent with the people of Rhode Island—their grievances—the long history of their peaceful and patient efforts for redress. We have seen the complicated arts resorted to, in order to thwart and cheat them out of their liberties, during the last two years—the efforts to deceive—to overawe—to intimidate—to prevent them from exercising their inalienable and Constitutional rights.—We have witnessed, nevertheless, their regular, lawful and peaceful organization of a Constitutional State government—a government every way superior, in its moral character, as well as in its authority, its legality and its order, to the usurped minority govern-

ment, under the Old Charter. We have seen the government not only organized, but in healthful and appropriate operation, and we have witnessed the mildness, the moderation and the magnanimity, as well as the equity of its acts. Up to the period now under review, May 1842, all was peaceful and quiet in Rhode Island, so far, at least, as the action of the majority, the Constitutionalists, was concerned. And nothing was wanting but a quiet and orderly acquiescence, on the part of the minority, according to their own favorite doctrine of "submission to the powers that be." All they had to do was to respect Constitutional "law and order," and there was nothing to disturb the public peace. They could not say that any one of *their* rights was invaded. All the change that had been effected, was the guaranty of the *same* rights to the *rest* of the community. And what more could they ask?

They knew, or ought to have known, that it is lawful, and regular, and Constitutional, and orderly, according to *parchments*, as well as according to first principles, in America, for the people to change, to alter their governments at their pleasure—that this principle was the "BASIS of all our political systems"—that for a minority to controvert that principle, by an armed force, was to attempt a National as well as a State revolution.

And they knew, too—they could not help knowing—that a Constitutional government *had* been organized in Rhode Island, and that the majority of the people had participated in the act, and were opposed to their course, in attempting to thwart their designs.

But they were unwilling to submit. Such was their "lust of power"—and of unjust, unlawful, unconstitutional power too, that rather than not possess it, they preferred to light the torch of civil war! This is proved by their early application to President Tyler for aid. And the same act proves that they knew the majority of the people of Rhode Island were against them, and in favor of the Constitution.

AID OF THE SLAVE POWER.

What could be more congruous and befitting than that the CHARTERISTS of Rhode Island should seek and obtain the aid of the SLAVE POWER, to subdue NORTHERN FREEMEN? Gov. M'Duffie had predicted their subjugation, within twenty-five years. Six years out of the twenty-five had elapsed. The efforts to extend slave law over Massachusetts and Rhode Island—aye, and over New York, too—had failed. What could be done? Opportunities were not to be disregarded. Sympathetic minds, northern and southern, watched with deep interest the progress of things in Rhode Island. Congressional speeches in favor of popular subjugation, irrespective of latitude and complexion, had not been lost, on northern ears.

The application was made. It was successful, of course. How could it be otherwise? The agents selected for the mission could not have been better chosen. One of them was John Whipple, of Providence, intimately connected with the South, the well known ally of

Harrison Gray Otis, in the attempt to prove abolitionists guilty of treason against the Constitution.* And Gov. Dorr was an abolitionist. It needs no letter-writer from Washington, to tell us how the negotiation was conducted, and what were the arguments used. All was anticipated by popular rumor, at the North, beforehand—confirmed by southern Journalists, afterwards. The argument was a short and direct one. If popular sovereignty was permitted at the *North*, the precedent would be dangerous to the *South*. If the disfranchised majority of Rhode Island could form a Constitution without leave of their masters, the disfranchised majority of S. Carolina might do the same, and the "peculiar institution" would be overthrown. The northern laborer must therefore be put down, lest the southern laborer should rise.†

PRESIDENT TYLER'S DECISION.

A letter from President Tyler, to Samuel W. King, who claims to be Governor of Rhode Island, under the Charter, was communicated to the Charter Assembly in April. It was greeted with joy, and hailed as an omen of triumph. Gov. Dorr, in his Message of May 3d to the Constitutional Assembly, very charitably attributes the tone of that letter to "a mistake of the facts." But no efforts on the part of the Constitutionalists could suffice to change his decision. In a second letter addressed "to the Governor of the State of Rhode Island," and which was obviously intended, *not* for the Constitutional Governor, but for Samuel W. King, the President maintains substantially the ground previously assumed. This letter is dated May 7. It acknowledges the receipt of a communication, "transmitting resolutions of the Legislature of Rhode Island, informing" the President "that there existed in that State 'certain lawless assemblages of a portion of the people,' for the purpose of subverting the laws, and overthrowing the existing government, and calling upon the Executive to interpose the power and authority of the United States, to suppress such insurrectionary and lawless assemblages, and to support the existing government and laws, and protect the State from domestic violence. President Tyler informs King that his "opinions as to the duties of this government to protect the State of Rhode Island remains unchanged." He proceeds to say that present appearances do not seem to require immediate action, &c. &c. But adds—"If any exigency of lawless violence shall actually arise, the Executive government of

* We should be sorry to do any injustice to this gentleman. Since penning the above paragraph, we notice in the papers that Mr. Whipple has resigned his seat in the Old Charter Assembly, and withdrawn himself from the councils of the existing usurpation. Perhaps he will make some explanations of his recent position, which will place him in a less unfavorable light."

† The Washington correspondent of the New York American says that the President was known to have been in favor of the suffrage party, until the arrival of this Mission from the Charterists. This corroborates strongly our views of that Mission.

the United States, under the authority of the resolutions of the Legislature, already submitted, will stand ready to succor the authorities of the State, in their efforts to maintain a due respect for the laws."

GROUNDS OF THIS DECISION.

In all that has appeared of these proceedings, nothing has transpired which would imply that any investigation of the Constitutional merits of the controversy in R. Island, or inquiry whether a majority of the people had regularly formed a new Constitution, had been had or was entertained or contemplated by the Cabinet at Washington. The absence of any such investigation or inquiry is apparent on the face of the correspondence. It is taken for granted that Samuel W. King, *formerly* Governor of Rhode Island, is the lawful Governor *now*, though the collision is well known to have taken place upon the rival claims of the two contending parties. A more cool and deliberate contempt of his Constitutional responsibilities, the President could scarcely have exhibited. The Constitution of the United States "guaranties to every State in the Union a republican form of government." What if it should appear that the President's oath of office required him to support the Constitution of Rhode Island, recently adopted, and the Legislature and Governor duly elected under it? This would certainly be the case, if the people had a right to form such a Constitution, without sanction of the Charter Assembly, and if as a matter of fact, they had actually done that thing. Why not *inquire* then, into that question, if it be a question, of American Constitutional law? And why not *inquire* into the particulars of the adoption of the Constitution? Why not gather evidence from both parties? Why not count the votes, and ascertain whether or no the claim of the Constitutionalists was a valid one? Why not refer the question to the Supreme Court of the United States?

How comes it to pass that in the letters of the President to Samuel W. King, no allusion whatever is made to any such Constitutional question—nor to the question whether the majority of the people of R. Island had adopted the new Constitution?

The marked timidity, caution, and fear of offending or alarming the democracy of the country, which characterises that second letter of the President, leaves us no room to doubt that a reference would have been had to the merits of the controversy, if the President had examined it, and if he had found it safe to have made allusion to that subject. Could he have cited the Declaration of Independence, Bills of Rights, Constitutions and Constitutional expositions of the country, in favor of his decision, wou'd he have failed to have done so? Or if, on any good foundation, he had arrived at the conclusion that the Constitution had not been adopted by a majority of the people of R. Island, would he not have been forward to say so? And how can we help inferring, from his silence on these points, that the President found no support from Constitutional law, and understood perfectly well, that the controversy he had espoused was *against* a majority of the people of Rhode Island?

But whatever inferences we may draw, one thing is certain. The President's decision "took the ground that the people of R. Island had no right, either by a majority or by the whole, to alter their government, on their own motion, or in any way except by the permission, through the agency, and under the direction and control of the existing government." It "had no reference to the question whether the Suffrage Constitution was or was not adopted by the body of the people, but solely to the fact, that it was not adopted under license from the Charter party." [J. Leavitt, in letter from Washington, May 3d.]

THE REAL CAUSE OF IT.

Does any one inquire into the causes of this very extraordinary decision of the President? The answer is easy. The Madisonian, the Official or Court Gazette of the President, at Washington city, tells the story.

From this paper it appears that a great excitement was created at the seat of Government, by the affairs of Rhode Island, *after the representations made to the Cabinet by the Charter Mission.* It is manifest (as Mr. Leavitt, who was on the spot, has shown, in the Emancipator) that no pains were spared to prevent any Congressional discussion on the course of the President. A member of the Senate from Ohio, however, Mr. Allen, had questioned the correctness of his position, and had endeavored to bring the whole subject into discussion. The Madisonian immediately denounced him as an abolitionist—declared the Free Suffrage movement in Rhode Island an abolition plot—denounced Gov. Dorr as an abolitionist and his adherents as traitors against the country. The following extracts may suffice, as specimens of its sentiments and language.

"Let us be watchful! Let us beware! If the Government of RHODE ISLAND [meaning the Charter party,] is to be overthrown by force, the revolution will not stop there. It will sweep, like a hurricane, TO THE SOUTH"

"The doctrine that NUMBERS can CHANGE a CONSTITUTION, without going through the forms of law, would, at once, convert the numberless BLACKS OF THE SOUTH into voters, who could vote down the SOUTHERN STATE GOVERNMENTS at their pleasure."

And so the working-men of the North are explicitly told, by President Tyler's Official, that "NUMBERS" (i. e. the MAJORITY,) must not be permitted to exercise their right, so fully recognised by American Constitutional law, to "change the government"—to "institute a new government whenever their safety and happiness require"*—lest the slaves of the South should follow their example! Verily, the question of American Liberty is no longer a question of latitude or of complexion.

* Judge Story's Commentaries, Vol. I. p. 198.

Again, said the Madisonian:

"If Dorr persists in the attempt to subvert the existing laws by force of arms, then it can no longer be concealed from the public gaze that the whole proceeding is nothing more or less than an *abolition movement!* Dorr is an abolitionist of the most rabid description, Allen, from Ohio, the demagogue, Jacobin, destructive, we have reason to suppose, will be the champion of the northern abolitionists, from this time forth. Dorr declared to *a mob* headed by Vanderpoel and Cambreleng, that '*all men were equal*'—'that he was the uncompromising advocate of human rights'—that 'a majority of human beings in any State had a right to alter and abolish the Constitution, *at any time*,' and fifty other cant phrases of the fanatics."

And so our Declarations of Independence, Bills of Rights, Constitutions, Expositions, Commentaries and all, are to be quoted by us only on pain of being denounced as demagogues, Jacobins, fanatics, by the Official Government paper of the nation! And the free white people of Rhode Island must not be permitted to assert and act out those declarations of their fathers, lest the "peculiar institution" should suffer damage.

Here we have a specimen of the expedients resorted to, by President Tyler's Official, to overawe the democracy of the country, and especially its delegation in Congress. To contend for *white* liberty in Rhode Island, is to come under the ban of proscription—is to be subjected to the charge of *abolitionism!* Verily, the democracy are receiving important lessons from the seat of the National Government.

Here, too, we have the key-note of the tone now held by the public presses of the country, to so great extent, in respect to Gov. Dorr and his adherents. In an article published on the receipt of news from Providence, and of the course of Gov. Dorr, the Madisonian says:—

"To all suggestions that the difficulty could be settled amicably, Dorr turned a deaf ear. He declared that no offers of compromise would be listened to *that did not recognise* "*human rights*"—the right of the majority—not only to govern, but *to alter and abolish governments at pleasure.* This is the vital principle of the abolitionists. Dorr is a rank abolitionist, himself. Were this principle established, the abolitionists would have a triumph, indeed. They would only have to creep through the southern States and take down the names of all the blacks over twenty-one years of age, and all the miserable, reckless *white fanatics*—men, who have nothing at stake, and would, at a moment's warning, engage in any lawless enterprise that promised booty—and then, at a concerted signal, throw up the black flag of insurrection, and proclaim the laws extinct."

Notice, here, in the first place, the *evidence* and *character* of Gov. Dorr's treason! He would "listen to no compromise that did not acknowledge HUMAN RIGHTS—the right of the majority not only to govern, but to alter and abolish governments at pleasure." This

news must have come from the Charterists of Rhode Island, and it agrees with their common tone of sentiment and their habitual derision of "the sovereignty of the people." Here, then, the treason is described. And what is it? Why, nothing more nor less than a determination to adhere strictly to the fundamental principles of American Constitutional law, as laid down in all our Declarations, Bills of Rights, Constitutions and Constitutional expositions—a simple declaration of fealty to the doctrines of Washington, Jefferson, Hamilton, Madison, Wilson, Iredell, Rawle, Story, &c. &c. &c., and expressed in almost their identical language!

And so it has become treasonable to repeat, with approbation, the well known maxims and declarations of American Constitutional law. *This* is it, to rebel against "law and order"! *What* and *whose* "law and order"? we may well demand! Not the established "law and order" of the country, most certainly. The Rhode Island Charterists and the southern slavocrats must have set up a "law and order" of their own!

Notice, next,—this treasonable doctrine of Gov. Dorr and of the American Constitutions, and of all the venerated fathers and eminent Constitutional lawyers of the Republic, "*is the vital principle of the abolitionists.*" Treason, of course!

Finally, "were this principle established—"aye! if the fundamental principles of American Constitutional law were only "*established*" (*?!?*) American Slavery would assuredly *fall*. [Precious confession!]

And, therefore, the Constitution of Rhode Island must be put down! A sovereign State—so far as the People are concerned—must be blotted out of the Republic. So much for the testimony of President Tyler's Official.

We will advert, next, to the speech of Mr. Senator Simmons, of R. Island, in the Senate of the United States. This gentleman is reported as having made a very eloquent and thrilling appeal *to the people of the South*, on the subject. Yes! the people of the SOUTH! We have no copy of the speech before us, but this southern description of it is sufficient. Its meaning can not be mistaken. "You help us put down our white slaves—our operatives—and we will help you keep down your black slaves." Mr. Simmons is, we believe, extensively engaged in the manufacture of cotton. We have it on good authority, a letter from Washington, that, in this speech, Mr. Simmons "*boldly defended the Charter, on all points.*"

What further proof do we need? If any were wanting, it is supplied by the late speech of Henry Clay, at Lexington, Kentucky. It was a speech against President Tyler, but he takes occasion to say that he approves his course, on the affairs of Rhode Island. *And why?*—Having described in his way, the movement in Rhode Island, he proceeds:

"And is it contended that the major part [note that! "the MAJOR PART!"] of this Babel congregation is invested with *the right* to build up, at its pleasure, a new government? That as often, and when-

ever, society can be drummed up, and thrown into such a shapeless mass, the MAJOR PART OF IT may establish another and another new government, in endless succession? * * * *
How such a PRINCIPLE *would* OPERATE *in a* CERTAIN SECTION *of this Union,* with a PECULIAR POPULATION, *you will readily conceive.*"

ATTEMPT TO REVOLUTIONIZE THE COUNTRY.

The Constitutional right of the people, to change their government, at pleasure, the right claimed in the Declaration of Independence, and declared over and over again, in our Constitutions, and Bills of Rights, and by all our recognized expositors of Constitutional law, is here expressly denied to a MAJORITY of the people. And in another paragraph, as already cited, Mr. Clay distinctly admits that "*an apparent majority*" voted for the Rhode Island Constitution, and that it was as regularly formed and adopted as the Constitution of Michigan!

And this right must be given up—must be crushed by the Federal Power, because, if "*the principle*" were recognized, the slaves of the South could not be kept under! Northern liberty must be crushed—Constitutional rights outlawed—the fundamental "principle" of all our American governments must go by the board, lest the "*peculiar population*" of "*a certain section of this Union*" should become free!

THE IMMOLATION OF LIBERTY AND LAW.

The promise of President Tyler was not forgotten. With the outline of the facts, the reader may be presumed to be acquainted. The first scene of the drama is thus epitomized by a late writer:—"The march of Federal troops from New York to Newport (R. I.)—from "Old Point Comfort" (Virginia) to New York, thus indicating the direction that would be given to the whole disposable force that is sworn to obey the orders of the President of the United States: the garrisoning of arsenals, the momentary ardor of the people in support of their rights; the apparent certainty of bloodshed; the triumph of armed force collected and sustained by the public purse, over the undisciplined people; the dispersion of the suffrage forces: the exultation of the successful power."*

It was on the 18th of May, that Gov. Dorr fled from Providence. A second scene was opened a few weeks after. Gov. Dorr rallied again at Chepachet, one of the interior villages. Thither the forces of the insurgents were directed. A second retreat of the Constitutionalists ensued. Governor Dorr fled, the second time, from the State and has not returned. His adherents dispersed. The victors had already declared the State under MARTIAL LAW. This was continued. A military despotism bore sway, the Constitutional government seemed overthrown, and nothing deserving the name of a civil government could be said to exist.

---

* Review of Wayland's Discourse, by a Member of the Boston Bar.

THE DOUBLE PROBLEM.—A MINORITY TRIUMPH; AND ITS FEALTY TO "LAW AND ORDER."

But how came it to pass, it may be asked, that the *majority* were overborne by the *minority* in these military struggles? This question has been a puzzle to many. The Providence Journal exults unsparingly, and labors unceasingly, to make the impression abroad, and on the strength of their military demonstrations, that the majority, were, in fact *against* the Constitution and in favor of its successful assailants. It was not to the *ballot-box* returns that the Journal appealed, but to the *military* array! It boasted its 4,000 men *in arms*, in contrast with the comparatively small muster of the Constitutionalists, and was "satisfied that a majority of the people are not in favor of the People's Constitution"! As much as to tell the people that the *war camp*, and NOT the *ballot-box*, was the proper place to settle the question of *majorities*, and to test the legality and validity of Constitutions! And yet, an appeal to this *only* legitimate arena of decision, on the part of the unsuccessful, they say is treason! This same gross absurdity lies at the basis of the discourses of Drs. Tucker and Wayland. The fact of successful occupancy and possession of the physical power of the State, *that*, in their view, settles all questions of legality and allegiance! yet the effort to *obtain* that only legitimate title to authority, is treasonable! Henry Clay, too, in his Lexington speech, exhibits the same political ethics. He demands "who are the people (in Rhode Island) that are to tear up the whole fabric of human society?"—"Our revolutionary fathers did not tell us by WORDS, but they proclaimed it" (i. e. "the right of the People to abolish an existing government") "by gallant and noble DEEDS."—The plain English of which is—If the people of Rhode Island claim sovereignty, let them get it by force of arms, if they can! Let them not quote American Constitutional law—let them not rely on the righteousness of their cause—nor on the majority of their numbers—nor on the regularity of their proceedings. This is all mere "*words*." When their bloody exploits place the power in their hands, their government will be legitimate enough, *then!*

A "prudent" lesson, truly, to the injured laboring masses, northern and southern! The preachers of this doctrine can not condemn those who practice upon it—unless they fail of SUCCESS—for *that* is evidently the divinity *they* worship!—What a lesson of popular violence! What a daring of the people to the bloody conflict! The suffrage *vote* of December 1841 goes for nothing, say the Charterists of Rhode Island, *because* the Suffrage *army* of May and June 1842 did not keep tally with it! Your votes against us—your arguments—your "WORDS" we count only a "farce," unless you will meet us with quantum sufficit of BAYONETS!

And these are the Conservatists of "law and order" are they? These are the men that dread revolutions and blood! These are the men who would have the nation believe that they have all along been in favor of conceding to the people their rights, if they would only

cease from disorder and riot—if they would only do things in "a regular and lawful manner?"

What are *their* notions of the legitimate foundation of civil government, and of the proper methods of establishing it, they have significantly told us! *They* will recognize no umpire of disputed and rival sovereignties but *the sword.* So their acts tell us, so their discourses and speeches assure us. Their early application to President Tyler, for aid, and their fiendish exultations—press-wise and pulpit-wise—on their success, their marauding scouts and their thanksgivings, let us into their bosoms. We read them, and understand *their* notions of rightful authority, and of "law and order." With *such* notions, their *military* preparations—their only dependance, would be formidable, of course.

ANARCHISTS! WHO? A PICTURE.

Now it happened that the *so-called* anarchists, disorganizers, infidels, incendiaries, and plunderers, composing the Suffrage party, (the leaders and the masses) held precisely opposite views of Constitutional "law and order"—of "legitimate authority"—of the "lawful mode" of establishing civil government, and THEREFORE it was, that they were less formidable in THE FIELD than at the *polls.* They had supposed that the Declaration of Independence—that the National and State Constitutions, with their Bills of Rights, *meant* something, and meant what they *said.* They had taken it for granted that if a majority of the adult male citizens of the State framed and adopted a Constitution and organized a government on precisely the model of the *other* American Constitutions, by the *same methods*, and exactly according to the express prescriptions of the Washingtons, the Jeffersons, the Madisons, the Hamiltons, the Marshalls and the Storys of the republic, and if they administered this government on principles of mildness and forbearance, impartiality and equity—securing the equal and inalienable rights of all men—why then, they took it for granted, that a minority consisting, (as they charitably supposed) of law abiding and honest and Christian men, would peacefully submit to the lawful government, and support it. The tone of Gov. Dorr's message proves this. Their own familiarity with the foundation principles of free government, and their own reverent attachment to the "law and order" growing out of them were such that it never seems to have occurred to them that the professed conservators of "law and order" would themselves turn insurrectionists—that the preachers of unqualified submission to the "powers that be" would shoulder the musket, causelessly, to overthrow them—that, in *such* a cause, the ambassadors of the Prince of Peace, would be among the first to raise the war-whoop, and turn their Universities into soldiers' barracks—that for no crime but organizing for the State "a Republican form of government," the President of the United States, in direct violation of his oath, would proscribe them, and pledge the Federal forces for their overthrow. In one word, they had no idea that there was enough of the spirit of anarchy, lawlessness, disorganization, insurrection, athe-

ism, murder, despotism, and hatred of righteous liberty, in the State, or in the nation, to muster any formidable military opposition to *such* a government, thus established and administered. And *therefore*, their MILITARY movements and calculations were not made in anticipation of such unexpected events. Even after the threatened interference of President Tyler, we are informed, they really believed that two hundred men would be amply sufficient to keep in subjection all the lawless men in Rhode Island, who would arm themselves against the Constitutional government.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE CASE.

In this estimate, they greatly erred; as the facts now prove. They had not sufficiently considered that Idolatry—the idolatry of Property—(which is identical with atheism) embodies always, and of necessity, the elements of murder, and of insurrection against righteous law—that Reason as well as Scripture teaches this universal truth—that whoever elevates *Property* above *Humanity*—*matter* above *spirit*, as the Rhode Island Charterists have so tenaciously and continuously and signally done, will, of course, until the delusion is relinquished, sacrifice human life, if need be, on the altar of property.—Thus it must be, because, in the nature of the case, it can not be otherwise. To suppose an intelligent and determined adherent of the land supremacy of Rhode Island, a supremacy of acres over immortal men, is to suppose a determined murderer, of course, whenever the conflicting claims of *man*, and of *acres*, shall come in collision with each other. For one of those claims, the one or the other, must yield. And, to say that the *acres* must *not* yield, is to say that *man must*. "The fool hath said in his heart—no God!" What next? "They are corrupt and have done abominable works." How is this made manifest? They "shame the counsel of the poor"—for "he that despiseth the poor reproacheth his Maker." Then comes the inevitable result—and what is it! Nothing short of cannibalism! They "have no knowledge"—"they eat up the people as they eat bread"—they devour human beings as coolly, with the same relish, and with as little compunction, as they would swallow a dinner! So God affirms of them,* and the testimony is found true. *Such* a people supply the very materials for an army of insurgents. But others are slow of heart to believe this, before-hand. And therefore the extent and depth of the spirit of murder and lawlessness in Rhode Island was not foreseen by the lawful government, nor by the majority of the people.

Nor did they, in their military calculations, make due allowance for the effect, on the suffrage forces, resulting from the general elements of *their* character, as contrasted with their *opponents*. They were not the men to raise an army out of, or to do service in a civil war, when they were enrolled. *Why?* Because they had human hearts left in them! They had some degree of regard for human

* Psalm XIV.

rights! Of course, they would be tender of human life. *These* were not the men for soldiers. The younger brothers who were disfranchised (by the law admitting only the oldest son)—*these* had not learned the creed of human inferiority to property. Humanity was something, in their eyes. For the most part, they would not take the lives of their older brothers, to maintain their own rights. Four or five such brothers, in one family, would decline taking arms at all, or take them to no purpose—while the one oldest brother would be prompt and firm at his post, ready to sacrifice all his younger brothers, rather than concede their equality with himself! Theory and fact, philosophy and history, agree here. Nothing is more certain, than that the war spirit in Rhode Island, commenced first with the Charterists, and almost universally pervaded their ranks, while it was tardily kindled, slowly infused, and faintly and partially exhibited in the ranks of the Constitutionalists. The peace men were, almost exclusively, among the latter, with the exception (by complaisance) of a few rich Quakers, who, we will charitably conclude, were not very much infected with the war fever.

CONFIRMATION.

The Charterists themselves, furnish us, as already hinted, the data for these statements. They admit that they were outvoted on the landholders' Constitution, and their own figures show 1,553 more votes for Gov. Dorr than for S. W. King, and 8,668 votes for the two traitors, (as they call them,) Dorr and Carpenter, by the side of 4,864 for their KING. [We will leave the 13,944 suffrage votes for the Constitution, in a population of 23,142, out of the estimate, *now*, to give the Charterists the benefit of their own figures.] Here, then, we have their account of the parties, as arrayed against each other at the POLLS. Now for the MILITARY review. Here, the Providence Journal, as before quoted, claims that the Charterists reckoned "4,000 good men and true, in arms," being nearly one-half of the 8,662 voters, at the greatest rally ever known at the polls (in 1840), by the "freemen" or landocracy of the State! The forces mustered with Gov. Dorr were derided, as a mere handfull. Never reported to be, at the most, over 1 to 2,000, and now believed to have been, in reality, only about 500. And therefore the Journal "is satisfied that a majority of the people are not in favor of the People's Constitution"! It boastfully asks—"Where is the majority?" It glories in "certain heavy pieces of ordnance, which deal out arguments not easy to resist!" and thinks "the traitor," Gov. Dorr, must now be "convinced!"

So then the Charterists, finding themselves outnumbered at the polls, by their own showing, resort to the war-hatchet! Annoyed with troublesome appeals to Constitutional law, from the pen of Benjamin Cowell and others, their best "argument" is found in "certain heavy pieces of ordnance"! If *these* fail to "convince" the "traitors" against minority supremacy, they have nothing more intellectual, or law-abiding, or orderly, to offer! The controversy, they

think, is to be settled in no way but by *killing their neighbors!* And they understand that it is to be a deadly encounter of "friend against friend, brother against brother"—the "lines of alienation running through families and firms of business."* Among the men to be butchered, are "civil magistrates," "who [say they] have sat at our tables"—"a considerable number of professing Christians," "who partake [with their opponents] of the elements of that body which was broken and that blood which was shed for our sins!"†

Work, here, for fiends, surely! Where, and among what class in Rhode Island, were they to be mustered? The Charterists can tell us. Out of the 4,500 in arms, they furnished 4,000 themselves! Nearly *one-half*‡ of their entire number of voters were on the spot, with their death-weapons in their hands! But of the "bloodthirsty" suffrage men, watching for "plunder," only about 500 could be rallied—about *one twenty-eighth* part of their voters!

THE BONE OF CONTENTION.

Yet the suffrage men were contending for "the blessings of a Constitution, free suffrage and an equalized representation," which "a great majority of the citizens of all parties" desired. [Vide A. C. Barstow.] Dr. Tucker adverts to "the anomaly of the existing [Charter] government, as the cause of the difficulty—to the "correctness of the principle avowed" [by the suffrage men] as the "object" to be obtained, to wit, the "equality of representation, and the RIGHT of suffrage."—"Petitions," to this effect, he attests, "have been *often* presented and *acted* upon," which implies that they had often been denied! And Dr. Wayland says, "it is universally conceded that it would have been better if a change in the elective franchise had been made, many years since."

Such were the *objects* of the suffrage men, with their comparatively small rally in the war camp. Mighty in numbers—mighty in the rectitude of their cause, by the concessions of their enemies. Mighty too, in their hold upon the *Constitutional law* of their country. Weak, only, in the rally for civil commotion—for civil war—even in the defense of the lawful civil government. And these are the bloodthirsty "anarchists!" the "plunderers!"

And as for the Charterists—for what did *they* rally? In *opposition* to the objects sought by the suffrage men? Yea? or nay?—If so, they rallied against the admitted *right!* If not, for what object *did* they rally? Was it for the mere love of killing their neighbors?—Or was it because a Constitution *establishing* the right had been framed and adopted without *their* leave—the leave of the minority—which leave they had, for half a century refused? Either horn of the

* Rev. Dr. Tucker's Discourse. † Rev. Dr. Wayland's Discourse.

‡ On reflection, it must have been *much more* than one half. For the 8,662 voters of 1840 included the whole number, of all parties, voting. But *many* of them are known to be Constitutionalists, and opposed to the Charterists, in their present struggle.

dilemma presents essentially the same point! *These* are the conservators of "law and order!" These are the men jealously careful of the "public tranquility, security and peace!"

ONE PROBLEM SOLVED.

This, then, we assign, as the grand secret of comparative imbecility, on the part of the Constitutionalists, in the *war* camp. *That* was not their place. *There*, they were out of their element. The friends of human rights are not forward to take human life. Constitutional "law and order" do not eagerly rush to the arena of civil war. The injured, after long forbearance, are not as ready to redress, with violence, their wrongs, as the wrong doers are to perpetuate and extend their injuries in blood. The worse than worthlessness of the *military* arm, in such a struggle, is one of the lessons to be learned by the late events in Rhode Island.

INFURIATED RIOTERS—ANOTHER PICTURE.

Take the following illustration, from the testimony of a Charterist, who gives, in the N. Y. Journal of Commerce, and N. York Observer, an account of the first encounter, at Providence, the 18th of May. This is the more to our purpose, as on that occasion, the Charter forces were so small, and the circumstances were such, as to give the Constitutionalists the advantage over their enemies. Let us see how they availed themselves of their position.

The writer reveals to us his own sentiments by describing the ranks of Gov. Dorr, as containing "*lazy fellows, infuriated by passion and liquor*," &c., &c., while the Charter forces, under Col. Blodget, were "*the respectability and worth of the city.*" Let us see then, how these *infuriated* creatures behaved. Here, we shall get a glimpse, no doubt, of the *worst part* of "the Dorr party," in their *worst doings*. For President Wayland, Dr. Tucker, and others, give us to understand that only a part of the suffrage men were bad enough to carry matters to this extreme of violence. And they boast that one and another, nay, that the large body of the Constitutionalists shrunk back, when they saw to what extent the unprincipled and reckless few were prepared to carry their violence. Now, then, to our writer.

"A cannon [he says,] stood before the door, [of Mr. Anthony's house, Gov. Dorr's head-quarters] loaded to the muzzle with all sorts of missiles, and pointed directly down the road."—"A suffrage man came running to them [Blodget's Company] and exclaimed 'Don't come this way, you will all be killed.' Col. Blodget took the kind advice of his enemy, more careful of his men than of himself, and approached the house from another direction. Having arrived at the house, a detachment was ordered in, and Gov. King, with the Sheriff went over to the house, which was full of men armed with all sorts of weapons for close fight. The suffrage men advised the detachment to go out, saying, 'if a gun is fired, you will all be killed.' The citizens could not but be conscious that there was too much ground for the declaration, for they were inferior in numbers and weapons for so close

a conflict. Yet they replied, 'We have been ordered here, and shall not leave our post until ordered to do so by our commander.' This was a most critical hour. When Gov. King and the Sheriff addressed the armed mass outside, declaring that they had come to arrest Dorr, and would arrest him if he was there to be found, the cry was, 'Never! never!' and muskets were aimed at the windows, but happily no triggers were drawn."—"Through all these incidents, there is strongly exemplified the N. England regard for law and life. Men could be found plentifully to resolve for what they deemed THEIR RIGHTS, a *considerable number* would take up arms and put themselves in battle array, and *some* would point their guns, but not a man would fire. To a certain boundary they could be led, and that was the boundary of law." [Journal of Commerce.]

The truth is, they knew that "law" was on their side. Yet they forebore. Gov. Dorr, yielding to the importunity of relatives, and desirous of preventing bloodshed, (well assured that there would be no relenting, on the other side,) fled into the country from his pursuers, and the armament was disbanded.

Thrice, then in one day, (like David, with Saul in his hand,) did they let their enemies escape, without so much as taking from them the skirt of a coat, though they had them in their power. So the writer in the Journal of Commerce, testifies. So we heard, on the spot, the same day, from Charterists, themselves. And before night, we heard them derided as fools and as cowards, for their lenity.* These are the men who are now incarcerated in the jails of Rhode Island, and scattered, by flight, over New England. These are the men whom President Wayland shamelessly describes as "ignorant and abandoned men, urged to treason by the hopes of glutting their revenge, against those who had been their truest friends, and by the expectation of plundering those who, it was supposed, had not strength or courage to resist!"

How lamentable must be the condition of those minds—with what terrible visions of conscious wrong doing must they be haunted, who can only read signs of "REVENGE" and indications of "PLUNDER" in such men! What can be more manifest than that it was only for THEIR RIGHTS that they were contending, and that—when it came to the dreadful alternative, they would waive even these—for the time being, rather than sacrifice the lives of their neighbors! Dr. Wayland and his clerical accomplices, had abundantly taught these men the duty of supporting a lawful civil government by the military force. *That* was all they ever attempted to do, and there appears no sufficient reason why their teachers should complain of their putting their own precepts in practice, unless that reason be found in the fact that they had turned insurrectionists themselves.

* "The cowardly leader fled," says the Rev. Dr. Tucker, Disc. p. 6.—And so, to *fight* for liberty is treason! infidelity! lawlessness—and to flee from murder and oppression is "cowardice!"

A MARVEL.

One instance of lenity and magnanimity on the part of the Charter commander, King, as an offset to the preceding, it will be expected that we should here record, in its place. So much celebrated has it been by them, that we may fairly consider it quite remarkable. It is this. After the suffrage forces were all dispersed, except 24 men, and while their opponents were 600 strong, Mr. King, whose life they had repeatedly spared the same day, forebore to massacre the 24 men to get possession of two guns that he knew would be peacefully delivered up, according to stipulation, whenever his forces should be withdrawn and disbanded; and which was accordingly done.

SUCCESSFUL INSURRECTION.

The attempt of the Constitutional governor, Dorr, in May, to take possession of the Arsenal and other State property at Providence, which a due regard for "law and order,' would have peacefully delivered up to him, was perversely and wickedly tortured into an attempt to take possession of the city, and pillage and divide the property of the citizens! On his return to the State, toward the close of June, he summoned the Legislature to meet at Chepachet, a village in the interior, on the 4th of July, the day to which they had adjourned. No pretense of any danger to the citizens of Providence could be made, now, and accordingly it was supposed by many, that the rally of a few, (in response to the call of Gov. Dorr, by Proclamation,) would suffice for the protection of the Legislature. It was not believed that 4,000 men in the State would causelessly rally against the lawful government, at a time when the panic about the "pillage" of Providence had subsided, and every body knew there had never been a particle of foundation for it. Here again, the simplicity of popular honesty and innocence failed to anticipate the depth and the inveteracy of aristocratic hatred against the *Sovereignty of the People*, and the determination, at whatever sacrifice, to perpetuate the *minority misrule*. The event showed their mistake. The war spirit, among the Charterists, by all accounts, so far from having disappeared was roused to a perfect phrenzy,* at the prospect of a legislative session of the lawful government at Chepachet. So far had they been seduced, step by step, from the path of rectitude, that they now seemed given up, of God, to fill up the measure of their iniquities, and show what was in their hearts. And the opportunity was offorded them. The dispersion of the Constitutional authorities by the organized mob of 4,000, will stand forever on the page of history, in illustration of their infuriate lawlessness.

AN INCIDENT.

It is related that Gov. Dorr reluctantly consented to a second flight, after an interview with his aged father, who had visited his fort, to as-

* "*All* seemed to look forward to a brush, [i. e. a *battle*,] with *pleasure!*"—"Our men were *aching* for the attack." [Providence Journal, July 1.]

sure him that his enemies would overpower him—that his life would fall a certain sacrifice, in their hands, and that no benefit to his cause could accrue,—using all his powers of parental entreaty and authority, to urge his flight. It is stated too, that, for this creditable exhibition of manly feeling, on his part, the venerable gentleman was harshly reproached by the Charterists, many of whom loudly and openly declared that he ought to be hanged! yes, hanged, for thus seeking to preserve the life of his dutiful and affectionate son! This was the spirit in which the minority triumph in Rhode Island was achieved. Is it to the discredit of the majority, that they did not equal it? And have they, *therefore*, forfeited their rights? Abandoned their Constitution? Or nullified or erased their December vote of 13,944 in its favor? Or renounced their allegiance to Gov. Dorr? Or recognized the usurper who has driven him, like an Alfred, a Bruce, or a Wallace, into exile? So stupidity may dream! Thus Henry Clay may declaim! So, the presiding genius of the Charterist presses in Rhode Island may scribble! Thus, wicked simpletons may sermonize! But TRUTH reigns—and GOD lives—and his throne stands—and his law is unrepealed—and "law and order" will one day, prevail, and be understood, and honored. Sycophancy and sophistry will hide their heads, then.

OTHER CAUSES OF FAILURE—THE FEDERAL POWER.

We do not claim for the Constitutionalists that their military inefficiency was *wholly* owing to their humanity and love of peace. Other considerations had their share. To a great extent they were overawed with the attitude of the general government. A support of the State government would bring them into collision with the National. A civil war in Rhode Island, they had reason to think, would involve all the free States, perhaps the whole country. Here was something to ponder. However lightly and flippantly the aristocracy could speak of such an event, however coolly they might contemplate it, and however rashly one half the Charterists in the State might jump into such a fearful conflict, without a moment's consideration, bayonet in hand, the majority of the people, the Constitutionalists, were not the men to hazard the national tranquility without reflection. Considerations of prudence as well as of philanthropy had weight with *them*.

It turns out, now, to be sure, that the promise of Executive aid was more in the prospect than in the performance. The meetings of "sympathisers" in New York and elsewhere, with the dreaded symptoms of a discussion in Congress, may have induced a little sober reflection at the Palace. A rupture with the northern democracy might be as formidable to Mr. Tyler, as the precedent of popular supremacy and emancipation in Rhode Island. From some cause the national troops sent to Rhode Island, it is said, were not permitted, by the President to be used.* He was not convinced that they were needed. It is

* Some recent developments, it is thought by some, furnish a new solution of Pres. Tyler's abandonment of the Charterists. [We say *abandonment*, for the

understood, too, that the Charterists are exceedingly dissatisfied with their Presidential patron. The Slave Power proves a less potent and trustworthy ally than they had supposed, and the President loses, for his pains, the votes of the Conservatists in Rhode Island. One of the aids of Gov. King is reported (in the Republican Herald of Aug. 24th,) as having declared publicly that "he would put a ball through John Tyler's head," if he should visit Rhode Island, as expected; (a sort of language, by the bye, as common as "household words" among the boasted defenders of "law and order" in Rhode Island.) And so, President Tyler's "Madisonian" discovers that "the Suffrage party were more sinned against than sinning."—Thus short lived are combinations of men to work wickedness!

But these specific results were not foreseen by the Constitutionalists. The letters of President Tyler to Samuel W. King exerted a mighty influence, for the time being. They recognised *him* as the lawful Governor of Rhode Island, and the Charter Assembly as the State Legislature! This gave respectability and consequence, in the public eye, to a knot of insurgents that, otherwise, would have been regarded with general abhorrence. The Governors of Massachusetts and New York (unlike those of Connecticut and New Hampshire, and the Legislature of Maine,) took sides with President Tyler, and complied with the requisition of the usurper, King, to deliver up Gov. Dorr and others, to be tried by the insurrectionists, for treason! John C. Spencer, the Secretary of War, honored the troops of the Charterists with a public Review; thus unfurling, as it were, the national flag in the camp of the insurgents. Thus bolstered, the monied and landed aristocracy, unlike the less wealthy majority, found means to raise the "sinews of war"—money—at least they could afford the risk of advancing it, from their own coffers, at a snug interest, in the prospect of making the *State* pay the expenses of their treasonable expedition

---

Providence Journal so considers it, and says that, henceforth, the Charterists will rely on themselves, and not be "deceived by a false reliance on the general government."] We have already mentioned, in a note, the withdrawal of JOHN WHIPPLE, Esq. from the councils of the Charterists. In his card of withdrawal, he intimates that he was pressed into the service by men who have *treacherously* abandoned him. The exact meaning of this complaint we do not pretend to understand. But rumor, perhaps we should say conjecture, furnishes a solution, to this effect. Mr. Whipple, it is thought, consented to help the Charterists out of their difficulties, and gain the aid of Pres. Tyler, *on condition* that the "Algerine law" should be suspended, arrests cease, and measures immediately be taken by the Charterists, to give the suffrage men a fair chance with their fellow citizens in a new Convention for framing a free suffrage Constitution. Pres. Tyler, it is supposed, pledged his aid on the same implied condition, and on the pledge of Mr. Whipple that it should be complied with. But finding that the pledge was not likely to be redeemed, Mr. Tyler first, and Mr. Whipple afterwards, gave them up to their folly and their destiny. Whether these are the facts, we can not say. But as *prudent* men, and having in view *the object* we have attributed to them, (viz. the prevention of a precedent in Rhode Island for southern imitation,) this was the best course they could take. But the madness of the Rhode Island Charterists seems likely to defeat them. The Rhode Island Constitution will probably be sustained.

against it—of taxing the disfranchized *majority* to foot the bill for the implements of their own butchery! No "plunder" nor incendiarism could be charged on the "respectable" allies of President Tyler, for *that!* For who but "fanatics" would suspect our slaveholding President of patronizing piracy? Who but they would deem it pillage to enslave and butcher the people by the aid of their own money? And could not the example of European Governments, with their Lords Bishops, be pleaded as precedent?

DIVIDED COUNCILS.

No wonder that while these scenes were enacting, large masses of the Constitutionalists should become disheartened, overawed, or at least led to the conclusion that still further forbearance, on their part, was better than a bloody conflict under such disadvantages. At an early period, before the rally at Providence, the 18th of May, a number of the State Officers, under the Constitution, resigned. Several others followed, soon after. They stated, in a printed card, over their own names, that they did not relinquish their principles nor their aims. They still adhered to the Constitution, and affirmed its validity. They protested against the course of President Tyler. Yet, rather than plunge the country into a civil war, they would, for the present, and in hopes of the returning reign of reason, waive the exercise of their rights and retire from office.

The Governor, the Secretary of State, and some others, thought proper to retain their stations, at all hazards. An interdict of treason, to be sure, was hanging over them, as over their fellows, for the simple act of holding office under the Constitution of the people, and by vote of an acknowledged majority, or at least plurality of them. Some of them had been arrested and thrust into prison. The Secretary of State, William H. Smith, had been seized, but was at large, on bail, awaiting his trial, if the insurgents retained power. A few only, at such a crisis, were determined on a war of self-defense. Gov. Dorr was reminded by them of his oath to support the Constitution, and yielded to their counsels. But the Suffrage newspaper—the Express—(unlike the presses of the Charterists,) was for peace. Thus the ranks of liberty were divided, while despotism presented an unbroken phalanx.

DESERTIONS—IMPRESSMENTS, &c.

We would not affirm that the honorable motives we have ascribed to the more peaceful among the Constitutionalists, should be conceded to *all of their number.* As in all similar cases, the cause of the people, while it appeared to be a *rising* cause, attracted sycophants who, in the hour of peril, deserted to the enemy, and became the most ferocious among the persecutors of their old associates. It is instructive to notice the encomiums bestowed by the aristocratic writers on all such. *These* are the men after their own hearts, and all their affected love of liberty is forgiven, on the very easy condition of active hostility against it.

There was still another class, to say nothing of the numbers whose classification might be difficult. Suffrage men were forcibly impressed, it is said, into the Charter ranks. Military law was proclaimed, on the opening of the Chepachet expedition. Rather than be shot down, or imprisoned, or tried for crime, by a jury, *not* of their peers, but of the *land*holders—not a few would probably enter the Charter ranks; or, at least, lay down their Constitutional arms, and afterwards justify their course to their friends by the best arguments at hand.

DISADVANTAGES—STRATAGEMS.

The Charterists could command the well-drilled volunteer companies of the cities who had been officered by themselves. The country militia, from the same causes, would be chiefly under their control. The arms, the arsenals, were wrongfully in their hands. The Constitutionalists who came together for self-defense, came spontaneously, promiscuously, unorganized, unofficered, unprovisioned and moneyless. *This* proved them a rabble and made them outlays—for the aristocracy recognise no "law and order" but the law of force and the order of patrician supremacy. The operatives in the factories—these could not, to any extent, quit their work and lose their wages and their places, to enter the army of the Constitutionalists. Loss of character with their employers, would be almost as formidable to them, with their families, as the loss of life. But their employers could parade themselves on the side of oppression without loss and without a blush! The leading clergy stood ready to desecrate the temples of Jehovah with pæans to their patriotic daring—and if they dragged their unwilling dependants into their train, no cry of "pillage and plunder" would annoy them. To plunder the poor of their RIGHTS was not accounted plunder. What like equality could there be in SUCH a struggle of the many against the few?

Add to all this, the deceptive rumors, ever and anon set afloat, by the designing, at convenient seasons, that the aristocracy had relented—that they were about to do justice—to recognize the people's rights—that negotiations for that object had been set on foot—or that they had been completed. It was a false rumor of this kind that contributed to scatter the forces of Gov. Dorr at Providence, the 18th of May, and to send back many others to their homes, who were on the march to join them. Whenever the Pharaohs of Rhode Island, either in pretense, or conscience-smitten, or panic-stricken, announced their design to do justice, the confiding people gave them credit for honesty, fled to their tents, and could scarcely believe that the hearts of their opponents were again hardened.

The reader probably understands, by this time, the secret of the minority triumph, by force of arms, in Rhode Island. And the story is, in many ways, instructive. It shows how the great mass of the human family, the world over, are managed and kept under. It shows how little physical force can do for liberty, and how little dependence republicans should place on military defense, against tyranny.

"LAW AND ORDER" OF THE CHARTERISTS.

It was "for law and order" that the aristocracy contended. So they said. It was *not* against liberty—*not* against free suffrage—that they took up arms. Oh no! It was only in support of "law and order."

True it was—the *kind* of law and order contained in our National Declaration of self-evident truths, in our Constitutions, Bills of Rights, and Commentaries of Statesmen, Jurists and Theologians, did not seem much to their taste. They had discerned nothing but symptoms of "pillage and plunder" in all attempts to support *these*. But let them not be too hastily judged. Tastes differ. They must have had some *beau ideal* of "law and order" in their own minds. It may be presumed to differ somewhat from the "law and order" promulgated by "the fag end of society"—by "the off-scouring of all things" AT A FOUNDRY! For what could that be but "a farce"? What could its support be but "treason"?

The aristocracy have triumphed. Disorganization and anarchy have been put down. So they tell us. "The Deliverance of Rhode Island" has been celebrated with Thanksgivings. The anthems have been sung—the organs played—the "Discourses" preached and printed. Aye! And the garlands of roses, from the lily fingers of accomplished beauty, have been showered from the windows of elegant and carpeted saloons, upon the heads of the valiant victors, as they marched along the paved streets. All is now as it should be. "Law and order" are enthroned. They reign in Rhode Island. And gratulation among the aristocracy of the country, northern and southern, political and ecclesiastical, are every where heard.

We will look in, then, at the picture, and see how it appears. What is the law, and what is the order, that displaces the obnoxious Constitution of Rhode Island?

In the first place, you have the "Algerine law"—commonly so called—the law already alluded to—the law forbidding the majority of the people, on pains and penalties, to assemble, in obedience to God's commands, to "make judges and officers in all their gates, to rule the people with just judgment"—the law making it "*a high crime and misdemeanor*" for any man to permit his name to be used as a candidate for office, and "TREASON" to accept an office when elected by the majority of the people, under their own Constitution!

But this was not deemed sufficient without the proclamation of *martial law*, which Judge Blackstone defines to be, *no law, but the suppression of all laws!* Martial law was accordingly proclaimed. And so the suppression of all laws is the "law and order" of the Charterists of R. Island! This agrees perfectly with the tone of the Providence Journal, and of Henry Clay's Speech, as quoted already. "Martial law is rigidly enforced," says the Providence Journal, of July 1. That is, according to Blackstone, *the suppression of all laws is rigidly enforced!*

And yet, strange to tell! One of the very gravest charges urged

(without proof) against Gov. Dorr, by President Wayland, is that he *intended* "to take military possession of the city—to subject this whole people to martial law"—and the question, he says, was, "whether we shall be governed by Constitutional law, or trampled under foot by a lawless soldiery."

The reader will now judge which party it was that proposed the peaceful reign of "*Constitutional* law" and which it was that actually "suppressed" all law, and trampled upon the Constitution, by a "lawless soldiery."

Let facts speak.—"Martial law is rigidly enforced" at Warren. "Martial law is strictly enforced" at Woonsocket. [Providence Journal, July 1.] "We have arrested (at Woonsocket) about 60 prisoners."—"Aaron White has escaped into Massachusetts. His father was seized this morning."—"On our way we *pressed into our service, every wagon and carriage that we overtook and met, which was done in conformity with* ORDERS from HEAD-QUARTERS." ["Order," with a witness!] "The friends of *order* (!!!) greeted us, every where with joyful countenances and spread good things before us."—"We think it *proper* to make a demonstration through the country, and may not be back, in some days." [Letter in Providence Journal, July 1st.]

Here we have a specimen of their doings, from their own pens and presses. It seems to have been regarded no "pillage and plunder" to seize the wagons and horses of unoffending travelers, whoever they might be, suffrage men or not, Rhode Islanders or strangers, (for this was near the borders of Massachusetts.) "The friends of *law and order*, greeted" the marauders "with joyful countenances" for all this! They siezed whom they thought "proper" and without civil warrant, for all civil law was "suppressed" now. Aaron White was obliged to flee from the State. And who is Aaron White? One of the most profound lawyers in Rhode Island—the man whose Constitutional argument presented to the State Anti-Slavery Convention of 1836 has been admired by the first lawyers in the country. Aaron White, it is to be presumed, could not have failed to see and exhibit the validity of the Rhode Island Constitution. Nothing but an arrest under martial law could meet the arguments of such a man. And nothing but flight from the State could preserve his freedom. His aged father, it seems, fell into the hands of military "law and order." "Fifteen have been committed to our jail" June 29th—says the Journal's Warren correspondent,

A citizen of Providence, under date of July 1st, writes an account of passing events to the editor of a New Hampshire paper, the Concord Herald of Freedom, from which we make a few extracts.

"Ever since the memorable 18th of May, the aristocrats of the State, and their servile minions, have been busy in preparation, to effectually crush Gov. Dorr, and destroy the Government, of which he is the lawful and Constitutional head."

"On the 26th ult., there was no Sabbath in Rhode Island. All was

anarchy and confusion. Many of the shops and stores were open, and *one pious, active professor* of religion was engaged in public trade! Where are the rules and discipline of the church? Set aside by '*Martial Law?*'"

"A deacon of one of the Baptist churches said, in my hearing, when speaking of marching to Gov. Dorr's encampment, "we must go determined to make a *clean sweep!*"

"But farther—*freedom of speech* has been stifled. A free and public expression of opinion upon the great question of impartial liberty, is a crime, to be punished by Court Martial judges. Take an instance. Our mutual friend Abel Tanner, in the hearing of a purse-proud aristocrat, remarked that the Charter Government was a palpable despotism,—an usurpation—a tyranny.—'Stop,' says Mr. Aristocrat, 'if you indulge in expressions like those, derogatory to Government, I shall send for a file of soldiers and have you arrested.' Many individuals are now confined, within yonder prison walls, against whom no other accusation can be preferred than, that at *some* time they have advocated the cause of the oppressed. A minister of the Gospel delivered, a short time since, a discourse embodying his views upon the suffrage question. His words were bulletined, and yesterday he was marched through our streets a pinioned captive.* But Dr. Wayland, Dr. Cyrus Mason, Dr. Mark Tucker, and Parson Vinton can advocate freely and blasphemously, tyranny and savage oppression—against such there is no law. Around and over this captive minister, brother ministers and private Christians, stood as guards.

"The *Constitutional* rights of our peaceable, *unoffending citizens* have been repeatedly and *outrageously* violated. Their houses have been entered and searched for arms, and of their goods they have been despoiled."

"On Monday, the 27th ult., the forces of the Charter party, about 3,000 strong, were marched, some in direction of Gov. Dorr's encampment, others to Pawtucket and to Woonsocket, others to their posts, and the remainder, constituting a majority of the city forces, to their homes. On the evening of the same day a Proclamation was issued by Gov. Dorr, disbanding his troops, and requesting the authorities of the State to permit them to retire peaceably to their homes. Gov. Dorr immediately withdrew, of which movement the landholders had abundant and conclusive proof. But they nevertheless, continued their march, capturing all who happened to fall in their way—sending out scouts, until they approached Gov. Dorr's camp. The

* Whether this is the case of Rev. Mr. Wakefield, Methodist minister and assistant Post Master in Cumberland, or whether it is another, we can not say.—The Republican Herald, of Aug. 27, contains the particulars of Mr. Wakefield's arrest by armed men—the rifling of his wife's bureau drawers, her band-boxes, and lodging apartments—Mr. W.'s imprisonment at Providence, with 12 others, in a cell 8 feet by 12, etc. etc! Fit cause of "thanksgivings" by Rev. Drs. Tucker and Wayland—with sound of "organs!"

scouting party being some distance in advance of the main body—knowing to their perfect satisfaction that Gov. Dorr had quit, valiantly stormed the fort, triumphantly entered it, captured some half dozen pieces of rusty ordnance, a baggage and provision wagon, a score or two of '*murderous*' pikes, a few muskets, some barrels of powder and provisions, and a free suffrage banner. Call you not this a glorious victory? Guards were immediately stationed, scouting parties sent out, *houses searched*, and every person, who even squinted towards the suffrage cause was arrested. At Woonsocket several persons have been captured and triumphantly marched into the city. At Pawtucket blood has been shed—Massachusetts blood too. A guard was on the evening of the 27th ult. stationed at the bridge, the dividing line between the States, when a gang of boys attempted to pass, but being stopped, began to stone the sentinels. A crowd of spectators was soon collected, some of whom participated in the affray. The sentinels instead of firing upon those causing the disturbance, fired into the crowd of unoffending spectators, *killing one man*, and wounding several others. Thus a wife has been widowed—eight children orphaned, and an immortal soul precipitated into eternity. So far as we can learn but *two* lives have been lost. But who shall estimate the countless value of those *two?*

"About *two hundred* prisoners have been taken, and are during this sultry weather confined in cells not more than *ten feet square*—TWELVE individuals in a cell. At the time announced for their entrance into the city, our streets and public buildings were filled with crowds of men and women. As they marched through the square pinioned and guarded by the *brave* heroes of a *bloodless unfought* battle—shouts were raised—kerchiefs waved—wreaths and bouquets of flowers were showered upon the soldiers. Smiles of demon triumph played upon the countenances of pious Christians, and mild, tender hearted women.* We had supposed that if humanity had a dwelling place upon earth, it was in woman's heart. How mistaken! Here were fathers, husbands, sons and brothers, ruthlessly torn from the arms and society of affectionate mothers, wives, sisters and children. But in the hearts of the females of Providence they shared not a sympathising emotion. Not a tear had they to shed for the poor and oppressed. When informed that some of these prisoners would probably be shot, the taunting smile and cruel jest plainly told of a hardened heart and a seared conscience."

The following account is copied from the Bay State Democrat, of August 24th.

"JUSTICE IN RHODE ISLAND. '*No man shall be required to give evidence against himself*'—so says the common law, so says the Declaration of Rights, and so says the Constitution of the United States. Now for the practice in Rhode Island. During the last month, some

* We have the same facts essentially, in the Charterist papers, set off with great airs of gratulation and triumph! Sad proofs of human depravity!

hundreds of our fellow citizens have been seized without warrant, precept or process, or any charge of crime or offense, bound and cast into foul and crowded dungeons, without any hope of release until they have given an account of themselves, or, in other words, until they have made some confessions that shall criminate themselves or their friends. Disguise it as they may, these examinations before the 'Lords Commissioners,' (a tribunal first invented for the punishment of the poor Covenanters, under Charles II., now for a time introduced into this country,) are neither more nor less than confessions extorted by torture, and as such can never be entitled to a moment's consideration, in any common law court. In this way, the unhappy victims are made to criminate not only themselves but others, not present. We detest the whole course of proceeding before the 'high commissioners,' as illegal, unconstitutional and inhuman. We attach no confidence whatever to confessions thus extorted. We know of one instance, at least, wherein an individual against whom evidence was endeavored to be found in this way, who, in pity to the sufferings of the prisoners, sent them his full permission to tell all the truths which they knew, and all the lies which they could invent about him, which might afford them any relief."

The following paragraphs are from a semi-monthly paper, entitled "John the Baptist," edited and published by John Tillinghast, Providence, July 8th.

"SHOCKING.—When the prisoners were brought into Providence last week, we saw a sight that was shocking to our feelings and stirred up our mind more than any thing we had heard or seen. We saw among the prisoners a number of professed Christians—many of them our familiar acquaintances and friends—a number of Old Baptists, Freewill Baptists and Methodists, tied together with ropes and driven along the street by a band of soldiers, and we saw among the soldiers many of our Old Baptist brethren! We felt horror-stricken when we saw Old Baptist brethren with guns and swords, driving Old Baptist brethren to prison, with their hands tied with ropes; and they were brethren, too, whom we could hardly be made to believe had taken up arms on either side. On making inquiry into the case, we found that these brethren were at meeting last Sabbath, and soon after the meeting commenced, before the minister had closed his prayer, a number of armed men marched up before the meeting-house, and some one cried out, 'A press gang.' This was enough. The meeting was frightened into confusion—a number of the brethren jumped out of the windows—a portion made their escape, some one way and some another. There was a general cry among the women, and in a confused state, the meeting was broken up. The brethren ran to the woods. While they were dispersing, some one cried out, 'Fire!' which increased the alarm. Some fled to Massachusetts, some hid in the woods, some in barns, and some fled to Dorr's camp. Thus in their flight they were scattered. Some were taken prisoners on the way.

On examination it was found that they had not taken up arms on either side, and they were released the next afternoon. * *

"'*I was sick and in prison, and ye visited me not.*'

"This was the language of our Savior in the description of the final judgment, and he made the acts of kindness shown to his brethren a test of character to tell whether they were suitable for heaven or everlasting punishment.

"Last Sabbath morning we visited the State's prison. Our object was to see the prisoners and preach to them, if we could gain permission. The thought never entered our mind that we could not have the privilege of visiting them, till Sunday morning: but on going to the prison we found the gate guarded by an armed man. We requested permission to enter and see the prisoners, but he informed us that it was contrary to their regulations. Then we asked if he thought it would be objected to by the keeper to let us preach to the prisoners. He said such a thing was not allowed.

"We turned away and walked home, thinking, 'How can we obey our Savior?' But inasmuch as we had shown a willingness to do his will, there was no more required. We feel to cast no reflections upon the authorities, but state the fact to show that our garments are free from guilt in this thing."*

Things went on swimmingly with the Charterists now. Any upstart youngster, who could shoulder a musket and vociferate "*law and order*," could sally out, at pleasure, and, accosting, perhaps, one of the most venerable and peaceful men in the town or the city, could peremptorily order him to shoulder his musket and join the ranks of the Charterists. He might be opposed to that party. No matter. That was probably the very reason why he was accosted. He might be conscienciously opposed to all violence. That made no difference. If he demurred, that was proof enough of his "treason." He must shoulder his musket, or, as a merciful alternative, he might take his shovel and go and work on the military entrenchment. If he declined doing either, he must go to jail, or before the city council. Musket, shovel, jail, or city council were the only alternatives for his selection.

This is no fancy sketch—no solitary instance—no unusual occurrence.

Now was the harvest time of "revenge," as well as "pillage." Old grudges, from whatever origin, of years' standing, were raked up, and had their summary gratification, now.—"Order reigns in Warsaw," said the Russian Autocrat. "Order reigns in Rhode Island," said the Charterists. It was like the order of the slave plantation. Any Charterist might say or do what he pleased to a Constitutionalist, and there was no redress—"no law but the suppression of all laws."

* The Republican Herald of Aug. 24th, speaks of it as among the "admitted facts" that "women have been denied an admittance to see their husbands and sons in prison."

Lone women were required to reveal the retreat of their husbands and brothers. If they demurred or plead ignorance, they were insulted, threatened, and sometimes, it is said, wounded, with weapons.

Parties of "lawless soldiery" at Chepachet and elsewhere, selected what houses they pleased, for their lodging, without leave and without ceremony—helped themselves or ordered the inmates to wait on them—devoured what they liked—knocked about and destroyed the furniture—occupied the beds, and left the families to stand up, or find accommodations as they could. Thus, at least, testifies common report, and if such testimony may be relied on, other insults were sometimes offered which we shall not now attempt to record. Those who have read human history and know what is human nature, and human conduct, where there is "*no law but the suppression of all law,*" those who mark the profligate tone of the Providence Journal, will need no formally drawn or legally attested affidavits to certify them of the particulars. If they can boastfully write and print what we have copied, it needs no gifted seer to tell us what were their unwritten doings. In times when decent, sober, and professedly Christian men can speak familiarly of shooting down a suffrage man, and say it would be right, we can infer how a band of hair-brained young soldiers would conduct, when removed from restraint.

Many things we do know. They were too public to be disputed. These, by way of specimen. Individuals that had never taken arms, were arrested, dragged to prison, or some times before what was called the city council, sometimes they would be released, after examination, and scarcely could they reach their homes, before they would be arrested again, and carried back—for they had no record of acquittal to show, and any other person that took the fancy—with or without a knowledge of the former arrest, and without any warrant, could arrest the same person over and over again. In some instances they were arrested a number of times.

Let it be carefully noted that it was after and amidst outrages and enormities like these—yes! and in joyous commemoration of them and to celebrate the bravery of these exploits, that the public Thanksgiving of July 21st, by Proclamation of the Charter authorities, was held, and laudatory discourses preached and published by Rev. Doctors Tucker and Wayland. This, it seems, is the "law and order" that they supposed is taught in Romans xiii. 1, and 1 Peter ii. 13.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH, AND OF THE PRESS.

One feature of the prevailing "law and order" was too prominent and notorious to be mistaken. As it was "the suppression of all laws," so it was the suppression of *freedom of speech*, and of the *press*. Even as early as the 18th of May, when we passed through the State, and spent a day in Providence, we saw enough to convince us that worthy and Christian citizens felt themselves safe, only by preserving silence. But this was before the complete triumph of "law and order," now under review. To speak a word against the Charter usurpation, was to be promptly charged with "treason!"

THE EXPRESS, the organ of the Constitutionalists, though its prevailing voice had been for peace, even to the last, was marked as one of the first victims of aristocratic triumph. The watch-word went forth that it should stop—and it did stop. As to the mode of the suppression, there are two accounts. One account was given us by a respectable lawyer in Boston, who had just heard it, he said, from one of the gentlemen connected with the Express office. His statement was, that armed men presented themselves at the entrance to the printing office, and demanded that the publication should cease, or they would throw the types into the street. Another version is, that the *landholder*, the Charterist, who owned the building, peremptorily ordered the printing to cease, and, with a similar threat. Under *martial law*, as wielded by every Charterist against every Constitutionalist, this process amounted, in essence, to the same thing, as before related. This was early in July. The paper, we believe, has not appeared since.

THE CASE OF BENJAMIN COWELL, ESQ., of Providence, furnishes another striking illustration in point. Mr. Cowell is a lawyer by profession, of highly respectable connections. He is son-in-law to the late Hon. Jeremiah B. Howell, Senator in Congress. Being of retired, studious and literary habits, and seldom taking any active part in politics, he had had nothing to do with the suffrage movement, previous to the adoption of the Constitution, in December 1841. As an intelligent and candid looker on, he could not but become convinced of the *fact*, that a majority of the people had regularly formed and adopted a State Constitution. As a law-abiding citizen, he felt in duty bound to give in his adhesion to it. Disposed to exercise, as usual, the elective franchise, he cast his vote for State officers, under the lawful Constitution. We infer that his vote was given for Gov. Dorr, as there was no opposing candidate, and such a man as Mr. Cowell could not but be sensible that a candidate equally qualified and deserving support, has seldom, if ever, been offered to the voters of Rhode Island. The truly republican and Christian features of the Constitution appear, likewise, to have made a favorable impression on his mind.

Who (that has not fathomed the depths of aristocratic malignity) would have supposed that for no fault but this, the "wealth" of the city would have been roused against Mr. Cowell—that his "character" would have been assailed—his "motives aspersed"—and that he would have found it necessary to write a pamphlet "in self-defense—to vindicate his own reputation?" Yet such seem to have been the facts. And the task was ably performed. In "a Letter," addressed "to the Hon. Samuel W. King, late Governor of Rhode Island," some time in May, Mr. Cowell grappled with the great Constitutional question involved, with a masterly hand, and in a truly dignified and manly tone.

But did this heal the breach, or appease aristocratic anger? Far otherwise. True, he had expressed his doubts of the "*expediency* of

the suffrage movements," but he had successfully vindicated their "*legality.*" This was touching the sore in the tender spot. For the argument could not be answered. If it could have been, we should have found some of the John Whipples, the legal advisers of the Charterists, (or some of their chaplains, the Waylands, the Tuckers and the Vintons,) coming to their rescue.

But what was lacking in the *argument* was made up by *martial law!* Mr. Cowell had proved the Constitution to be legally valid and binding. The resort of its opponents was "the suppression of all laws"—their revenge for so foul a crime as the vindication of Constitutional law, was to make him an outlaw. The "law and order" so piously celebrated by Sermons and Thanksgivings, found out how to dispose of Mr. Cowell. He had never consented, so far as we know, to stand as a candidate for office, under the Constitution—he had never accepted office under it—and so "the Algerine law" had not sufficient terrors for him. He had never taken up arms, and could not, on this, or any other account, be arrested for treason, unless *all law was suppressed!* But when *this* consummation was reached, Mr. Cowell was made to understand his position. The Letter to Ex-Governor King was considered by some of his opponents to be treasonable. They said they would have him arrested, and so he fled from the State to escape from them!

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

At Bristol, the house of a Charterist was entered, through mistake, by the "law and order" patrol, and in the absence of the owner, who was supposed to have been a Constitutionalist, his lady was required to produce the keys of his bureau, which was done, and they rummaged the contents at their leisure. On a discovery, afterwards, of their mistake, in assaulting a "law and order man," they made an apology for their rudeness.

Old and highly respectable farmers, on the Island, could not market their commodities in Newport, without encountering indignities and abuse, and danger of arrest. They, therefore, changed their market town to New Bedford, Massachusetts.

Two meals a day, of coarse fare, were allowed the prisoners at Providence and Newport. At the latter place, the friends of the prisoners were, in one instance, at least, denied, for a time, the privilege of handing their friends an additional supply.

Strangers, from other States, were often suspected, insulted and threatened—in some cases arrested, without cause. The case of Mr. Hoskins, of N. Hampshire, imprisoned at Providence, has excited the public attention.—We have just heard of another case, in which a citizen of Central New York, (as is stated,) was arrested at Newport, for no crime but boarding with a suffrage man, which brought him under suspicion. He was imprisoned—released—insulted again—and after many vexations, chiefly from this cause, (being a man of nervous temperament,) escaped from his persecutors by suicide. Our informant, a worthy and well known citizen of our own neighborhood,

a deacon of a Presbyterian church, just returned from a visit to R. Island, was likewise threatened himself, and was often cautioned against expressing his opinions, too freely.

A Baptist minister, near Newport, having offended "law and order," by preaching in favor of *peace*, found his house invaded by six men with bayonets—was arrested—marched to head-quarters—released—arrested by others again—marched away—and again released. Whether arrested a third time, we are not certain.

"LAW AND ORDER" CANONIZED.

Turn now to the Thanksgiving Sermon of the Rev. Dr. Tucker, delivered July 21st, in the midst of these scenes, and in triumphant and laudatory and grateful commemoration of them! At a time when the marching and countermarching of his own eulogized soldiers on the Sabbath, their lawless and riotous breaking up of public worship, and their arrest of the worshipers on that day, without even the forms of law, were regarded as matters of course; when churches, (according to some accounts,) as well as the University, were converted by them into soldiers' barracks, observe the language of the preacher. Witness his affected zeal for the Sabbath, (p. 12,) and his attempt to cast odium on the suffrage men, because somebody, in no way connected with them, and in another State, had *written* against the divine authority of the Sabbath! And hear him add, "*Let us bless God, to-day, that we are under* WHOLESOME LAWS, that OUR ALTARS have NOT BEEN POLLUTED"!

We must not fail to contrast the "law and order" reigning in R. Island, and celebrated by Drs. Tucker and Wayland, with that guarantied to all American citizens by the Constitution of the U. States—the paramount law of the land: securing, as it does, "the right of the people to keep and have arms"*—"the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers and effects, against all unreasonable searches and seizures." Compare these Constitutional guaranties with the lawless riots of the Charterists of Rhode Island—then hear them proclaim a Thanksgiving, and see them assemble, with their high priest, President Wayland, at their head. Hear him read homilies on the danger of anarchy, and the blessings of government. And hear him say—

"The proclamation which has invited us to set apart this day for the purposes of grateful acknowledgment, was but the utterance of that feeling which pervaded every spirit. I give thanks unto God, that it is so. *It is becoming a people loving* JUSTICE, *and hating* WRONG! It is meet that, after RISING AS ONE MAN, [note, here, the endorsement of the Doctor to the UNITY of the movement!] to vindicate the claims of liberty and LAW! [in what *manner*, the preceding statements of facts show!] to defend our country

* The "searches and seizures" were commonly made under pretense of searching for arms, which, when found, as in a few cases, (fowling pieces, etc.) they were taken away, of course.

from *anarchy*, and our hearths from violation, we should first, and above all, render the praise of our deliverance unto God."

"CLAM-BAKES."

Nothing is more notorious than that, during the period under consideration, no public meeting for political objects could be held, however peacefully, by any citizens, except Charterists, in Rhode Island.

In order to enjoy that privilege, a "*clam-bake*," or pic-nic party, of ladies and gentlemen, was held down the river, near the oyster and clam beds, *on the Massachusetts side!* The same "Republican Herald" (of Aug. 10,) that contained the Charter Governor King's suspension (under date of Aug. 8,) for 23 days, of the martial law, proclaimed June 25th, adventured to publish, likewise, the resolutions adopted at this gathering of Rhode Islanders in Massachusetts, very prudently suppressing the names, which, it may be inferred, the parties concerned did not think it prudent to give. Yet the resolutions would do honor to any citizens of a free nation.

PRETEXTS.

From the Republican Herald, evidently cautious and prudent, as it is,* we glean many curious particulars. One way in which "Law and Order" contrived to find a pretext for its despotism, and its barbarity, was to keep up mock excitements about pretended attempts to fire the city, too ridiculous to impose upon sane minds. Nero, it is said, could not consummate his bloody designs against the Christians, till he had made the ignorant believe that they had attempted to burn the city.

ANOTHER PROPOSED CONSTITUTION!—THE "REGULAR MODE" OF FORMING IT!

Hundreds of citizens were under arrest, or in prison—others on bail. A much larger number, it is believed, were scattered in other States, and some of them, including the lawful Governor, for some time in a state of concealment.

Such a state of things, it appears, was the very best time for "Law and Order" to give the State a new Constitution to its own liking, instead of the hated Constitution of the People. The vote of the Charter Assembly, for the call, was passed, if we mistake not, at the June session. Care was taken, of course, that the apportionment of delegation to the Convention should partake of the time honored inequality, so essential to minority supremacy. With this advantage in their favor, aided by "Algerine" and martial law, with the leaders of the

* After the suppression of the "*Express*," the "Republican Herald" began to publish some of the passing occurrences, but soon after announced that it had been taught that "the truth was not to be spoken at all times." It declined publishing the particulars of outrages committed by the Charterists, during the reign of the ruling dynasty. A leading citizen declared that "the paper was filled with treason,—that the types ought to be thrown out of the windows," adding "he would be one to help do it!"

Constitutionalists in prison or in exile, and with the dread of arrest hanging over the remainder,* they could afford to call a Convention of the People—and magnanimously win the applause of *pseudo*-abolitionists by permitting their colored domestics to vote with them!† Some significant queries in the Republican Herald, of July 23d, we subjoin.

"*Does not the Governor and Council of this State, at the present time, hold a power above all law?*

"*If that be true, do we not live under an absolute despotism?*

"*Is it intended by the absolute Government of Rhode Island, to continue the martial law until after the next election—thereby compelling men to vote with the fear of violating laws they do not know or understand?*

"*Dare men assemble for peaceable purposes?*

"*Dare the People assemble and ask their Rulers how long this arbitrary government is to last?*

"*Dare the People meet to memorialize Congress on the present state of things?*

"*Will they do it?*

"*Dare the People meet to appoint committees for the various purposes required in the approaching election?*

"*Will it be attempted?*"

The tone of response to these queries, in subsequent numbers of the Herald, the hints of the Editor, and the resolutions of the R. Island "clam-bake" in Massachusetts, made "the farce" of the Convention movement, under martial law, too glaring, even to the eyes of the Charterists themselves. But the suspension of martial law for only 23 days, barely including the time to choose delegates, with the terror of its return hanging over them—with the "Algerine law" still in force, and with the best citizens of the State in exile for the crime of writing and voting, and while new arrests were taking place, made the suspension as farcical as the measures that had preceded it. The suffrage men in Rhode Island wisely determined to have nothing to do with the Convention, nor with the choice of delegates to attend it. Why should they, under such disadvantages, and suffering such insults? And while they knew they had a republican Constitution, lawfully, peacefully and equitably framed and adopted by the people themselves?‡

---

* Said a French Colonel at the head of his regiment—"I would not, for the world, interfere with the freedom of elections. But I give you distinctly to understand, that the soldier who will not vote for General Bonaparte to be first Consul, shall be shot!"

† Yet the Charter Mayor of Providence, it is said, has since refused the use of the Old Town House, for a colored man to celebrate the glorious *first of August*. Colored men may support despotism, but not liberty!

‡ We see in the Republican Herald of Aug. 20th, a notice of another "Clam-bake" of the "friends of equal rights," to be held at "Medbury's Grove," *in*

TRAITS OF TYRANTS.

President Wayland is ready to "blush" at the thought that leading men among the Charterists have been "denounced as tyrants and oppressors!" But by what works and characteristics shall tyrants and oppressors be known? Let us listen again to Dr. Emmons.

"*Good rulers*, who sincerely desire to promote the public good, have nothing to fear from the voice of the people, and consequently, *have no disposition to stifle it*. But all BAD rulers are AFRAID of the voice of the people, and wish to deprive them of freedom of speech, lest they should remonstrate against their AMBITIOUS and NEFARIOUS DESIGNS. It has always been the policy of despotic rulers to suppress the liberty of speech, on political subjects."——"Those rulers, therefore, who endeavor to destroy the liberty of speech on political subjects, *plainly discover a tyrannical spirit*, and give the people just ground to fear that they are actually seeking *to strip them of all their rights*, and subject them to ABSOLUTE SLAVERY. They may attempt to destroy the right of remonstrance, or restrain liberty of speech respecting the public measures of public men, by sophistry, artifice or threats. They may artfully insinuate, that if the people privately complain or publicly remonstrate, they manifest disaffection, disrespect and disobedience, towards those whom they ought to esteem, revere and obey. If this sophistry fail of answering their purpose, they may throw out terrible threats, and positively declare that all complaints and remonstrances are the high crimes of *treason and rebellion*."——"This language ought to be alarming to a people in a free government, and put them on their guard against those who would seduce or awe them into silence."*

Emmons' Sermons, Vol. II. pp. 270, 271.

Massachusetts, Aug. 30th, which contains the following "ultra" and "fanatical" regulation. "*No intoxicating drinks will be allowed on the grounds.*" The wine-drinking aristocracy will doubtless read fresh proofs of anarchy and infidelity in the movement.

* In quoting so frequently from Dr. Emmons, we would not be understood as endorsing all his political opinions. Perhaps he was not, in all respects, self-consistent, in his honest and generally successful efforts, to guard against despotic power and against anarchy. These he seems to have regarded as opposite *extremes*, rather than as different forms, and incidentally diverse developments of the *same thing*: namely, *a disregard of inalienable human rights*, whether by the many or by the few. With his view, which is the commonly prevalent one, it was not strange that Dr. Emmons, in company with many of his times, should incline to the theory of "a mixed government," of which so much was then said by the admirers of the British Constitution, which our fathers had been accustomed to look upon, as the palladium of their liberties—their safe-guard against despotic encroachment. The atheism and the anarchy, (or, to speak quite as properly, the despotism,) of the French Revolutionists, whose leaven had begun to spread, more or less, in this country, and who never understood true Christian democracy, inclined such men as Dr. Emmons to throw the weight of their influence on the other side of what they considered the *balance* between the two extremes; to look with a sort of reluctant suspicion on absolute popular sovereignty; to imagine that, somewhere in the political system, there must be placed a check upon its exercise; and consequently to regard unmixed democracy

The next time President Wayland feels inclined to "blush," it is to be hoped that it will be in view of the despotic and barbarous and lawless acts to which he has lent his countenance and sanction.

In contrast with the sentiments of Dr. Emmons, it may be well to present those of Rev. Dr. Tucker, in his Thanksgiving Sermon, at Providence, July 21st, entitled "the Deliverance of Rhode Island." After naming three writers, *neither of whom are residents in Rhode Island*, and stating that one of them, "*more reckless than the rest*," had "called the constituted authorities* of R. Island tyrants and usurpers," he adds :—

"These are living men, and what must be the state of morals and public sentiment, when they unblushingly and without prosecution, erect their batteries against all that is sacred," &c. &c.

And again—"It is now acknowledged that it was a capital mistake to suffer these men (meaning the Constitutionalists) to forestall the public mind." [Discourse, p. 14.]

Yes! Strange to tell! Those who call the Charterists of Rhode Island "usurpers and tyrants," are "*living men*"—they have neither been shot nor hanged! And they go *without* "*prosecution*," too! Fresh proofs of declining "morals," and vitiated "public sentiment." But then they "*live*" out of Rhode Island—where "law and order," after the model of Drs. Wayland and Tucker," and with the sanction of Pres. Tyler, and his Secretary of War, have not yet been established!

"Law and Order" made "a capital mistake," doubtless, in not putting on the screws, sooner, before "the public mind" had become so much infected with the heresy of the "Dorr party," as to let the reprovers of Samuel W. King and William Blodgett go unprosecuted and unhanged!

THE CONTRAST—AGAIN.

In sober earnest. Let the render contrast the course of the "law and order" party, as they boastfully call themselves, with that of the men whom they would represent as disorganizing, ferocious and lawless. When did the Constitutionalists, the really "constituted authorities of Rhode Island" betray any propensity—any desire to suppress freedom of speech—to put down by prosecution and by threats, their

---

as the natural ally of disorder.—It is manifest that quotations in favor of popular sovereignty, from the writings of such a man, one of the moral and intellectual giants of his day, come to us with the double weight of AUTHORITY and of CONCESSION. Such men, were they now on the stage of action, would regard with double horror and disgust, the *despotic anarchists* who wield "the suppression of all law" in Rhode Island. *Both* the *apparent extremes*, against which such men as Dr. Emmons labored, unite signally and visibly in the Charterists, proving the unity of despotism and anarchy, in *fact*, as well as in *philosophy*.

* The Doctor made a trifling mistake here. It was not the "constituted," but the *un*constituted authorities that were thus described. It is the Doctor and his friends that traduce the "*constituted*" authorities, and wage war against the *Constitution* itself!

political opponents—insurgents against the lawful government though they were? Read the Message of Gov. Dorr, and examine the acts of the Constitutional Legislature. Contrast them with the language of Dr. Tucker. And when, at length, in self-defense, and to gain possession of the public archives, lawlessly withheld from them, a few of them took up arms—and when their enemies were in their hands, compare their lenity and forbearance with the ruthless rigor and barbarism of their opponents.

It would indeed be strange, if, in times of public commotion, however produced, there should not be some lawless men, on both sides, and wanton outrages committed, by way of retaliation and otherwise, by the party on whose side might be the right of the controversy, (and the majority,) as well as by the original aggressors. And this is among the many reasons why public disputes should not be tested by military violence, which is indeed outrage, of itself. But the Charter papers, themselves, bear sufficient testimony to the comparative moderation of their opponents. The eagerness with which the arrest of three or four Charterist spies was magnified into a terrible outrage, and the prominence given to the story that an active Constitutionalist had been guilty of an attempt at highway robbery, when the imputed offense, real or unreal, was committed after his desertion from the Constitutionalists, and while he was in the employ of the Charterists themselves,—these and similar exhibitions of effort to make something terrific out of almost nothing at all, when placed by the side of such details as have now been presented, are among the most eloquent attestations of the general sobriety, order and peacefulness of the Constitutionalists. Had they committed many outrages, such as were common with the Charterists, there would have been no occasion to manufacture or dress up the silly stories that have been put into circulation.

But the direct tendency of despotism, on the part of the few, is to produce ferocity, on the part of the many. And if such results had been, or should yet be, witnessed in Rhode Island, all men of reflection and candor will understand where the principal responsibility properly rests.

ARISTOCRATIC ARTIFICE.

The aristocracy, whose injustice occasions public commotions, are ever ready to seize upon and proclaim the fact of their existence, even when the outrages are committed chiefly or wholly by themselves, and to urge their existence as a reason why a "stronger government" should be established. The editorial fomenters of the great riots against the abolitionists in 1834–5 in New York City and elsewhere, very gravely discussed in their papers, afterwards, the evils of popular commotions, and craftily threw out intimations that a popular government would not, perhaps, be found sufficiently energetic to protect property in the cities from riotous outrage! We were looking for similar developments in Rhode Island, and have not been disappointed. We have it on good authority, that not a few of the Charterists

in Rhode Island whose insurrectionary movements against the constituted authorities have embroiled the State, are very free to confess (poor souls!) that their confidence in democratic institutions is much shaken, (?!?) and that they are compelled to suspect that nothing short of a monarchical government will be able, much longer, to preserve "law and order!"

CONNECTION BETWEEN POLITICS AND RELIGION.

Such is the history of the subversion of civil liberty in Rhode Island. Those who look after the moral causes of political revolutions, who understand that liberty is based on public morals, and that the morals of a people are dependent on their religion—will naturally inquire into the religious character of a people where such phenomena have been witnessed. Especially will they desire to know, (unless the facts of the history have sufficiently revealed it,) what is the prevailing religion of the wealthier classes—those who have so long wielded the power of the State, and who are now making such remarkable efforts to retain it. What sort of religious teachers do they patronize? And what has been their position and influence amid such demonstrations as have been witnessed?

If there be any one truth which more than any other, has been ascertained by experiment, and in respect to which, all reflecting readers of this world's history are agreed—it is perhaps, this:—That the political condition of a people can never rise higher than that indicated by the character of their current religion—that the one is the never failing index of the other. When a people enjoy rational freedom, it is because, in some good degree, their leading men have been brought under the influence of the ethics of a pure religion. And when on the other hand, their liberties are lost, it is because their religion, first, and their morals, next, have become corrupted, and undermined. Thus it must be, if man is a moral and religious being, accountable to his Maker, and subject to the binding authority of the divine laws of his existence. Thus it must be, unless the current sentiment that religion and morality are the indispensable foundations of free institutions, is to be regarded as idle rhetoric.

In estimating the religious character of a community, or of any particular class of citizens, by their political acts, we only follow the divine rule of testing the tree by its fruits. It matters not how active and busy a people may be in their solemn convocations, nor how devout and zealous they may appear in their worship, and in their zeal to make proselytes. All this may be well, in its place, if it spring from a right spirit, and conform to a correct standard, but, (if the Hebrew prophets, and if Christ and his Apostles are to be our guides in this matter,) we are bound to reject all that religious zeal and activity as worthless and abominable that consists with an aristocratic and proud temper—that flourishes in connection with a contempt of the poor, a disregard of human rights, and a sympathy with those who oppress men, and turn away the judgment of the dependent and helpless.

INFLUENCE OF RELIGIOUS TEACHERS.

It follows from what has been said, that an immense weight of responsibility rests on religious teachers, in respect to the maintenance of public justice, the security of men's rights, and the preservation of the public peace. A tyrannical government is always connected with a corrupt and ungodly priesthood. Bad rulers may indeed reject the admonitions and silence the voices of faithful religious teachers, who reprove their oppressions. And so, a besotted and stiff-necked people may, in like manner, reject the counsel of God against themselves. But both rulers and people in such cases, seldom, if ever, fail to fortify themselves against their own consciences and against the sentiments of surrounding communities, by heaping to themselves teachers after their own hearts. And corrupt religious teachers, in ancient and modern times, have always been the chief instruments of deluding and blinding despotic rulers and their willing dupes, to their own temporal and spiritual destruction. "Like people, like priest"—has grown into a proverb, and we might quote high clerical authority for the maxim that an unfaithful ministry, if supported and recognized, will always bring their flocks down to their own low level and false standard.

It can not be supposed that the recent events in Rhode Island have furnished the world with the first, the only exception to this universal rule. Just so certain as men of wealth and power in that State, have succeeded in crushing human rights, just so certain is it that they have found support and countenance by professed teachers of religion. Without such aid they could not have kept themselves and each other in countenance; they could not have met the public gaze, unabashed, in the midst of their foul and grim work. A priesthood, of some sort, depend upon it—the Rhode Island aristocracy have had—must have had! Whether openly infidel or professed Christian—matters not. All sects, atheistic or otherwise, have their accredited teachers. Their assumed *name* is not always the proper index of their true *characters*. —THIS is to be learned from the WORK in which they are engaged, and in the DOINGS of those who resort to them for their AID. The picture of aristocratic "LAW and ORDER" in Rhode Island is of course but the transcript—the *fac simile*—so to speak—of a clergy, of some sort, that are to be found, some where, in or about the latitude and longitude of Rhode Island. To doubt this—is to doubt fundamental first principles—is to discredit all history—sacred and profane—is to leap the precipice of downright skepticism in respect to all moral and political causes and effects.

WHAT THE LEADING CLERGY OF RHODE ISLAND MIGHT HAVE DONE.

The principal clergy of Rhode Island were in a favorable position to exert a healthful, a *truly* "conservative" influence in the civil and political affairs of that State. They were well supported. They had direct access to the leading men of the community. Of these, their congregations, to a great extent, were composed. With these, they

held intercourse, daily. They were their patrons, their parishioners, their friends. They mingled in the same social circles. They were looked up to, as the wise and the holy men, the teachers of religion and good morals, in the community where they resided. They had the general confidence of both the rulers and the ruled. We have their own testimony, that their churches were composed of the active men of *both* the contending parties. One of their number, who may, perhaps without impropriety, be designated as their most prominent and leading man, was at the head of the flourishing University in that State. He says "I have resided here for about fifteen years. I have mingled with citizens of every name and of every class. I have the honor to number among my friends, the rich and the poor!" [Wayland's Discourse p. 24th.] His literary reputation was the boast of his State, not to say, of his country. His influence with his clerical brethren of all sects, in the city, and State, was almost without a parallel. Sympathizing with him and his views were the principal clergy of the cities. They were well educated, intellectual, polished. They stood at the head of the principal religious sects in the State, and enjoyed a high standing with their brethren of other States. Whatever *they* taught in respect to the mutual duties and rights of the rulers and the ruled, would be regarded with a deference bordering on veneration. The statesman who could quote *their* authority and enjoy *their* approbation had little occasion—so far as present success was concerned—to consult Constitutional authorities, or to cite common law. What Madison and Blackstone and Marshall and Mansfield might have written, was of less consequence to the political disputants of Rhode Island, than what was said by these men.

They had Bibles in their hands. With the contents of that blessed Book, with the pages of universal history, with the Constitutions and usages of their country, with the fundamental principles of righteousness, especially, it was their business to be familiar. Their knowledge and their advantages they were bound and were solemnly pledged to wield for the glory of God and the good of their neighbors—their brethren—their country—their race.

It was their proper province to teach what, at such a crisis, the people and the magistrates most needed to know. Their duty to do this, they have acknowledged, in the teachings (such as they are) that they have published to the world.

The great truths they were commissioned to teach, were the best antidotes to such evils as were witnessed. The supreme authority of God—the true dignity of man—the priceless worth of the immortal soul—its infinite superiority to all sublunary things—to dollars, to palaces, to acres—its unending existence—its changeless responsibilities—its corresponding prerogatives—its inalienable, God-given rights—the ensnaring nature of wealth—its tendency to beget a disregard of human rights—the damning sin of oppression, of arrogancy, of pride, of every aristocratic habit and feeling—the oneness of the human family—the equality of all men—the duty and privilege of each one to

consider and treat his brother as his equal—the origin of civil government, in God's authority, and man's wants—its proper business "to execute judgment between a man and his neighbor"—the duty, and consequent right of every man to "choose judges and officers, to rule the people with just judgment"—to assist in removing national sins—all these they would, of course, teach, if they taught the first principles of the religion they profess. Had they taught and properly applied these fundamental truths of religion, giving to each of their hearers a portion in due season, "the right of the poor of the people" would have been accorded to them, long ago, (as President Wayland seems to admit ought to have been done,) and no jarring contention, would have rent the State of Rhode Island.

This, at least, we have reason to believe, would have been the fact. But suppose it had been otherwise. Suppose a difficulty had arisen, the leading clergy *might* have done something to heal the division in the community, and in their own churches, if they had been thus disposed. They might have exhorted the landholders to do justice—and the suffrage men to urge their just claims, (with their *own* ready aid,) by moral means only, in humble reliance on God, and without a resort to the sword. In one word. They *might* have been the preachers of RIGHTEOUSNESS and of PEACE—and they might have acted in conformity with such preaching. Who believes that if they had done thus, there would have been a bayonet mounted, or a musket shouldered, or a human being killed or imprisoned, in Rhode Island? The thing is incredible. Posterity will never believe it. Reflecting and well informed Christian men, in and out of Rhode Island, do not believe it, now.

WHAT THE LEADING CLERGY OF RHODE ISLAND DID DO.

Instead of taking the course just described, the principal clergy of Rhode Island—those standing at the top of society, (as the world counts precedency)—the great majority of religious teachers in the State, took a course as directly opposite as can well be conceived. Instead of rebuking the spirit of aristocratic pride, they manifestly imbibed and promoted it. Their conversation, their deportment, and their preaching, plainly showed that they were the sycophants of the rich, and the despisers of the poor. They did not advocate justice. They did not vindicate human rights. They did not plead for the oppressed. They did not even exhort the oppressor to forbearance and peace. On the other hand, they were among the most ready assertors of minority and landholding supremacy. They were early in their exhortations to the *military* support—*not* of the Constitutional Government of the State, but of the aristocratic insurrection *against* it. They were members and Vice Presidents of the *Peace Society!* Yet they openly encouraged a *civil war*. And their own concessions betray their consciousness, that *the side* they espoused in this war, was *not* the side on which was the "correct principle," and the "RIGHT!"

Rev. Cyrus Mason, of New York City, formerly pastor of one of the largest churches in Providence, found it convenient to revisit the people of his former charge, soon after the military demonstrations of the 18th of May, and to occupy the Sabbath with a sermon against the suffrage party, and in favor of the conservatists of minority "law and order." The conscientious scruples of those who declined taking up arms in their support, he considered indicative of their deficiency in patriotism and public spirit. Whether this gentleman's opportune presence among his clerical brethren in Rhode Island, was the result of any concert or understanding between them, we are unable to say. But their course, both before and after this time, was such as to leave us in no doubt whether the aid and countenance of such an ally from a sister city was acceptable and welcome.

On the return of the Newport artillery, May 19th, a procession was marched from Long Wharf to Trinity church. A "Herald of the Times" Extra, brings us the account. "All the protestant clergy in town were present, among the procession. Old Trinity never presented such an array of serious, yet happy countenances." The artillery too, were present. "Their ranks of bristling bayonets" says the Herald, "were a most imposing sight." "Religion and honor met in beautiful combination."—"It was a spectacle illustrating both the piety and the patriotism of the inhabitants of Newport." "The services were commenced by a masterly voluntary on the organ, by Mr. Taylor, after which the choir chanted the 'Gloria in Excelsis.' The '*Te Deum*' was then said by the Rev. Francis Vinton, Rector of the church, who then offered prayer and thanksgiving from the incomparable Liturgy. He then read from the thirteenth chapter of Romans, beginning with 'Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers,' &c. The Rev. Mr. Vinton then ascended the pulpit and delivered the address," &c., in which he said—"The Government of this State has not forfeited its right to our allegiance. Its authority is sanctioned by God's command. It was assaulted by an armed insurrection," &c. "Instead of the triumph of the DOGMAS of political FANATICISM" [Mark that! The "*dogmas*" of the Declaration of Independence!] "we discern their DEFEAT and DOWNFALL." "*Order* has overcome the fury of individual will, and religion once more beams upon our homes and altars." "Members of the ARTILLERY COMPANY!"——"I stand here, in the two-fold capacity of a minister of Jesus Christ, and a representative of your townsmen, to thank you for your good conduct in favor of liberty and law."

So much for the Episcopacy of Newport. We hear of no "*dissent*" from this, on the part of the "church clergy" in other parts of the State. One is reminded of the Church-of-England services still celebrated once a year, in memory of that "blessed martyr" and profligate despot, Charles I., of whom President Stiles declared that he was justly sentenced to the block.

Can it be that the Baptists and Congregationalists in Rhode Island

support ministers whose solemn blasphemies against God and Liberty equal those of "the Rev. Mr. Vinton?" So it would seem!

President Wayland, from the high places once trod by Roger Williams, breathes the same spirit, and employs similar language! "The abomination of desolation, standing where it ought not." Read his "Discourse, delivered in the Meeting House of the First Baptist Church, Providence, May 22d, 1842," and published by special request of "the Charitable Baptist Society," as communicated by their Committee, consisting of Hon. John Pitman, Rev. A. Woods, D. D. and Gamaliel L. Dwight, Esq. Read likewise, his *second* "Discourse" delivered as above, on the day of the Public Thanksgiving, celebrated by request of the Charter authorities, July 21st, 1842. Notice the *date* of the last mentioned Discourse, in connection with the *facts* already recorded as having then transpired and being then in progress. While those horrid outrages against liberty, and law, and humanity were yet fresh, and still in progress, listen to a religious discourse in which they are celebrated with thanksgivings! Yes! Under the reign of martial law, which is "no law but the suppression of all law" —while hundreds of citizens and scores of Christians, for no crime, were dragged to prison, or were scattered in exile from the State, while no man could with safety express his opinions unless they corresponded with those of the landholding minority unlawfully in power, while freedom of speech and of the press were prostrate, hear President Wayland, in obedience to the call of the successful insurgents, giving thanks to God for their success, extolling "the intrepidity of our citizens, the skill of our commanders, the patriotism of our people"—complimenting them as "*a people loving justice, and hating wrong*"—"rising as one man to vindicate the claims of liberty and law, to defend our country from anarchy, and our hearths from violation!" Hear him celebrate "OUR present *tranquility*"—"without fear or molestation"—and add "*I believe all this has been done in answer to prayer!*"

It is said that the preacher had shown his faith by his works—had literally shouldered his musket—dismissed his students, and given up his University for soldiers' barracks!

Did he really believe that justice and equity required this! Hear him. "This difficulty, you are all aware, arose on the question of suffrage."——"With the wisdom of this provision I have *nothing to do!*" In another place, he concedes that it would have been better to have extended the suffrage long ago, and that this "*would have saved us a period of intense anxiety and alarm!*" He admits that "the representation had become palpably *unequal*." That is, (if words mean any thing,) INEQUITABLE!—INIQUITOUS! But "with the wisdom" of it he has "nothing to do"—*only*, to shoulder arms in *support* of it; and then proclaim to his hearers, from the pulpit, the duty of supporting the despotic usurpation, "at the peril of their souls." And then to the well anticipated objection that this was "new doc-

trine and restrictive of liberty" he had nothing to answer but a repetition of his sacerdotal anathemas!

In accordance with these teachings, the churches, we understand, have excommunicated members for no crime but voting and acting under the People's Constitution, *without taking up arms!* Thus, while open, insurrectionary violence against the lawful, republican government, mounts the pulpit; peaceful, lawful, ballot-box adhesion to Constitutional liberty, meets with excommunication.

All this, and more, if possible, comes likewise from the Congregational pulpit. Witness Rev. Dr. Mark Tucker's Discourse, on the same 21st of July Thanksgiving, "published by request," and entitled "The Deliverance of Rhode Island!"

Deliverance from *what?* From the reign of martial law—"the suppression of all law?" Deliverance from lawless arrests? From vexatious and malicious seizures? From the felonious breaking open of houses? From the lawless seizure of horses and wagons? From imprisonments and exile? Certainly not, if the people at large had any share in the "deliverance!" It was for the triumph of all this, that the "Thanksgiving" was held. The "deliverance of Rhode Island" must have been the "deliverance" of the aristocratic insurgents! And *from what* were *they* "delivered?" From the reign of equal, Constitutional law! From the relinquishment of their unjust, arbitrary, irresponsible, unconstitutional power! This was all the "deliverance" that had been achieved. For President Wayland is our witness that the relinquishment of "palpably unequal" power, would have secured the public tranquility—would have "*saved* (them) *a period of intense anxiety and alarm!*"

SELF CONVICTED.

The Waylands and the Tuckers of Rhode Island concede too much to consist with a vindication of their own course. By their own showing, the rights of the People had been long withheld. Those rights they still continued to claim. And when and where had these gentlemen ever espoused their cause and pleaded for the *right?* How comes it to pass that we find them sympathizing with the oppressor, instead of the oppressed? Yes! and even joining with the oppressor in deeds of armed violence against them? Instead of encouraging the slaughter of the wronged, why did they not insist on first giving them THEIR RIGHTS, and THEN see whether any military movements against them would be needed? By their own concessions, they have been zealous in favor of an armed warfare of the *wrong* against the *right*—of the *injurers* against the *injured!* This fact lies on the face of their own writings, and can never be erased.

From Dr. Tucker's Discourse, it is easy to gather all the essential facts necessary to the vindication of the Constitutionalists, the condemnation of their opposers, and the refutation of his own foolish slanders. His admissions cover nearly the whole ground. It was "the anomaly of the existing (Charter) government" [pp. 8, 9.] that occasioned the disturbance. He admits "the *correctness of the prin-*

ciple avowed as the *object* to be obtained, to wit, the *equality* of representation, and the RIGHT of suffrage. [p. 9.]—He says too, [p. 4.] that "*every layman* OUGHT to make himself acquainted with civil concerns, and avail himself of all the privileges of a FREEMAN." So that (unless a man must needs be a landholder or a landholder's oldest son, in order to be a "LAYMAN!") it follows that the disfranchised of R. Island only performed a DUTY, when they voted for the free suffrage Constitution, and that the Charter Assembly rebelled against the God who appoints human duties, when they proscribed it. The aggrieved, Dr. Tucker says, were the "friends," "brothers," "family" and "business" and church connections of their antagonists. [p. 16.] And they "were not carried on, step by step, by the force of circumstances." No! Their measures were "the result of deliberation and long continued effort." [p. 10.] Petitions for a removal of "the anomaly" of the Charter government, and in favor of "correct principle"—"equal representation"—"the RIGHT of suffrage" and "a new Constitution" had been *often presented*," and (of course!) had been "often" refused. [p. 8.] After all this—"they went forward and *organized a government*." [p. 10.] The fact of the "deliberate organization of A GOVERNMENT" is here distinctly admitted, and no proofs are offered that it was not a just and equitable one. Yet, the Reverend Gentleman celebrates with "thanksgivings" the forcible and insurrectionary *overthrow* of this "ORGANIZED GOVERNMENT," and the substitution of martial law, "the suppression of all law," in its stead! He exclaims, "Were we to follow the impulses of grateful hearts, we should now arise from our seats, and strike the loud anthem of praise. 'Yea, let all the people praise him.'"—["Here," says the pamphlet sermon before us, "the organ struck up an anthem of praise, and the congregation arose simultaneously from their seats!"] Is it not marvelous that such insurrectionary thanksgivings should have been coupled with the apostolic admonition, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers," &c.?

Other ministers, in abundance, followed in the wake of Messrs. Vinton, Tucker, and Wayland. But we forbear.

"ALL ARE NOT SUCH!"

Of this fact, Dr. Tucker seems to have been conscious. Speaking of the suffrage men, he says—"As Jeroboam, in his rebellion, appointed priests of the lowest of the people, *ministers* would have been found of a character to uphold such proceedings."

There may have been something prophetic in the ken of Dr. Tucker. The account of the "Clam-bake" of Rhode Island Constitutionalists at Medbury Grove, Massachusetts, as published in the Bay State Democrat of Aug. 6th. contains the following incident.

"After the usual preliminaries, the immense assemblage which had collected, stood in silence and with uncovered heads, while the Throne of Grace was addressed by Rev. Mr. Kenyon, of the West Baptist church in Providence. The prayer of Mr. Kenyon was one of the most truly eloquent, spiritual and patriotic, to which we ever had the

pleasure of listening, and found its way to every heart. He spoke of the presiding care and protection of an overruling Providence in all the changes of life, whether peaceful or stormy, of our free institutions, the violence which had been done to them, the necessity of having a forgiving temper under all outrages on the rights and liberties of the people, and that the blessings which had been secured to us all, by the great charter of universal rights, would sooner or later be enjoyed by every son and daughter of Rhode Island.

"The Declaration of American Independence was then read; &c. &c."

"THE TEST QUESTION" BEFORE US.

And so, the cause of Constitutional Liberty has its ministers of religion, too, as well as the cause of aristocratic usurpation and martial law. But then, they are "from the lowest of the people." So Dr. Tucker assures us. They are "the fag end of society"—"the filth and offscouring of all things." Perchance the "common people" will "hear them gladly,"—though they are persecuted, and thrust into prison.

The lines between despotism and freedom, are thus, at length definitely drawn. And drawn too by the priestly conservators of usurped, lawless, abused minority power. The gauntlet is by them thrown down, the anathema is *by them* pronounced. Ministers and people, who will not submit, must henceforth dissent, "at the peril of their souls," and be cast out of the church!

This too, in order that civil liberty, among the whites, at the North, may be trampled in violence and insurrection and anarchy, under foot. The day of honied and affectionate yearnings after "the unity of the spirit" and "the peace of the churches" has gone by. Those lullabies have accomplished their objects—have had their day. The sword of ecclesiastical excision is, at length, drawn against all who will not surrender their freedom. The Rubicon is passed. The war against human rights is to be waged, without compromise, and without quarter.

Let it come! With our whole hearts, let us welcome the contest. Too long has the storm been gathering in silence, or only muttering its faint and seemingly distant thunder unheeded. Let the loud peal rouse us, at last, to our duty, and fix us at our posts.

"WHO IS ON THE LORD'S SIDE?"

Two sorts of religion exist in this country. They are found dividing in sunder, the principal religious denominations. The one is the religion of despotism. The other is the religion of liberty. "Where the spirit of the LORD is—there is liberty"—and where the spirit of the devil is, there is despotism. "What communion hath light with darkness? What concord hath Christ with Belial? What part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" The separation must take place. The process has commenced. All the powers of earth and hell can not prevent it. The power of the Great Head of the Church is pledg-

ed for its completion. And he has declared that when it is accomplished, his people shall "return and discern between the righteous and the wicked—between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not," [Malachi iii. 18.] Whereas "now we call the proud, happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt (that insult) God, are even *delivered*," [ib. v. 15.] and celebrate their "deliverance" with impious "thanksgivings."

OUR WORK, AND OUR PROSPECTS.

Not until this purifying separation shall be made, will the churches be prepared to be instrumental, in the conversion of the world. "The thrones" of despotism must "be cast down" before "the Ancient of Days sits" in his glory.

Are we enthusiasts—fanatics—disorganizers—because we thus speak? Let us quote then, once more, from a writer who will not be charged with wildness, fanaticism, or disorder. In a sermon on "revolution and reformation" preached, December, 1819—twenty-three years before the adoption of the Constitution of Rhode Island, DR. EMMONS insisted on the same truths we now utter. His text was in Ezekiel xxi. 27. "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: until he come, whose right it is, and I will give it him." The illustrious personage alluded to, in the text, says the preacher, "*was, undoubtedly, the* PRINCE OF PEACE, *whose way God meant to prepare by great changes and revolutions among the nations of the earth.*" The leading sentiment of the discourse is thus stated:—"GOD WILL BRING ABOUT THE GLORIOUS REIGN OF CHRIST, BY OVERTURNING ALL THINGS THAT STAND IN THE WAY OF IT." The inquiry is next raised—"WHAT THINGS DO stand in the way of the glorious reign of Christ?" In reply to this question, the *very first* particular introduced, by the preacher, is the following:—

"EVERY SPECIES of TYRANNY stands in the way of the glorious reign of Christ. His reign will be a reign of RIGHTEOUSNESS and PEACE, to which every species of tyranny stands diametrically opposed. Both *civil and ecclesiastical tyrants* always have been and still are hostile to the reign of Christ. As soon as Christ set up his kingdom, all the kingdoms of the world, being tyrannical, were unitedly opposed to his kingdom, and employed all their power and influence to prevent its enlargement and establishment. And all pagan and Mohammedan governments are still tyrannical, and still hostile to the kingdom of Christ, and many Christian nations are more or less tyrannical, and consequently more or less hostile to the pure and peaceable government of Christ. *Civil* tyranny, in every nation, and in every form, stands in the way of the glorious reign of Christ, and so does *ecclesiastical* tyranny. *This* early prevailed in the Christian church, and has been carried to a greater height than any civil tyranny ever has been. The Christian clergy soon began to usurp unchristian authority, and gradually carried it to higher and higher claims, till the pope presumed to be the universal and supreme head of the church, and to exercise a right to govern and put down the

greatest kings in Christendom. Though such exorbitant ecclesiastical tyranny has been considerably checked and restrained in later times, yet it still predominates in all popish countries, and has NO SMALL INFLUENCE in EVERY PART of the Christian world. And just so far as it exists, it is hostile to the spread of the gospel, and the approaching reign of Christ. EVERY SPECIES OF TYRANNY, in EVERY PART of the WORLD, is one thing that stands in the way of the reign of the Prince of Peace."

Emmons' Sermons, Vol. II. p. 302.

Does the reader desire to know what would be regarded by Dr. Emmons as tyrannical? Or does he ask for the evidence that he would consider the reigning Charter authorities in Rhode Island and their clerical abettors to be "civil and ecclesiastical tyrants?" Read over again the quotations already made, containing his views of those rulers who seek to suppress the voice of the people. And read likewise his declaration concerning the "friends of tyranny," that they wish for a government which grants exclusive rights and hereditary honors and distinctions"—[like those of the "landholders" and their "oldest sons," for example]—and that they want to rise above their fellow men by unjust means, and have it in their power to trample upon the great mass of the people, with impunity." [Vol. II. p. 106.] If this picture does not belong to the Charterists of R. Island, to whom does or can it belong?

The friends of liberty and pure religion may see, then, what is their proper WORK, and what are their PROSPECTS. The overthrow of civil and ecclesiastical despotism is undoubtedly the grand characteristic eterprise of the present and next coming ages. *And the enterprise will succeed!* Listen yet again to the language of Emmons, towards the close of the same Sermon.

"Christians have great encouragement *to exert themselves, vigorously and wisely,* in preparing the way for the glorious reign of Christ. *He has pledged his faithfulness* TO REMOVE ALL OBSTACLES OUT OF THE WAY, and he is faithful and powerful, who has promised." [p. 310.]

DESTINY OF DESPOTS.

Would the inveterate and unrelenting conservators of despotism learn their destiny? They may read it in the second Psalm. They may read it, if they choose, in the *former* writings of their *present* apologist and leader, President Wayland.

"Thanks be to God, men have at length begun to understand the rights, and feel for the wrongs of each other. Let the trumpet of alarm be sounded, and its notes are now heard by every nation, whether of Europe or America. Let a voice, borne on the feeblest breeze, tell that the rights of man are in danger, and it floats over valley and mountain, across continent and ocean, until it has vibrated in the ear of the remotest dweller in Christendom. Let the arm of oppression be raised to crush the feeblest nation on earth, and there

will be heard, every where, if not the shout of defiance, the deep-toned murmur of implacable displeasure." [How "impertinent and meddlesome" are these "foreign sympathisers" !] "It is the cry of aggrieved, insulted, much-abused MAN! It is human nature, waking in her might, from the slumber of ages, *shaking herself from the dust of* ANTIQUATED INSTITUTIONS, girding herself for the combat, and going forth, conquering and to conquer."*

And again, "WO UNTO the *man*, wo unto the *dynasty*, and wo unto the *policy*, on whom shall fall *the scath* of their *blighting indignation*."

THE TWO ALTERNATIVES.

There are, then, but two ways in which the despotisms that stand in the way of Christ's coming reign, *may* be overturned. Both these ways are described in the Bible. and in the sermon of Dr. Emmons.

One way is, "by public calamities and desolating judgments"—"by the *sword*, by pestilence and by famine, the common weapons of divine indignation"†—by the civil commotions and bloodshed that despotism naturally produces and provokes. Hence the descriptions of Isaiah. "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?"—"I that speak in *righteousness*, mighty to save?"—"Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth the wine-fat? I have trodden the wine-press alone; and of the people there was none with me; for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and stain all my raiment."—That is, when "*the people*" are not workers together with God, in bearing testimony against oppression, and he is left "alone" to work out human deliverance by his just judgments, he will use the sword of contending armies and rival parties to overturn despotic governments, and establish freedom, and thus prepare the way for the reign of Christ. This, however, is not the way in which good men should labor for the promotion of the grand object. *Their* duty lies in a different direction.

The "more excellent way" is "to enlighten the minds of the ignorant, the barbarous, the tyrannical, and the erroneous, in respect to their civil and religious tyranny, and their absurd and vicious customs and manners,"—to employ "the gospel as the principal external instrument to overthrow and remove all obstacles in the way of Christ's final and most glorious reign upon earth"—relying upon the Holy Spirit "as the efficient cause of making all the other means effectual."‡ This method is more powerful than military armaments, which are more efficiently wielded by the enemies than by the friends of freedom. Especially is this true in an age like the present, when men are beginning to inquire after the RIGHTS and the WRONGS of existing controversies, rather than after the fact of forcible triumph, and of

* Discourse I. on the Duties of an American Citizen. April, 1825.

† Vide Emmons. ‡ Emmons, Vol. ii. pp. 304—5.

physical strength. These are the methods that are "mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing [every thing aristocratical and despotic] that exalteth itself against the obedience of Christ."

And these peaceful weapons may be wielded, now, as in primitive times, by those who are accounted the "filth and offscouring of all things"—the "fag end of society"—"the miserable multitude"—"the rabble." Nor is it to be taken for granted that the gross ignorance and error, the heartless barbarism and tyranny that now reign and riot in the high places of Rhode Island, in her palaces and the learned halls upon East Providence hill—thick, dense, dark, and impenetrable as they may seem to be, are beyond the reach of these heavenly weapons. Suffocated and degraded as humanity must needs be, under such a heavy pressure of worldliness and wealth, of pedantry and pride, let us never forget that it is humanity still—that the vital spark of immortality is yet there; that the breath of omnipotent and sovereign Mercy may yet kindle it. Farther from the kingdom of heaven it may indeed be, than publicans and harlots—a more discouraging field of missionary labor it may present, than Burmah, or Hindostan, or the Sandwich Islands. But it is nevertheless within the province of Christian exertion and Christian prayer—for "the field is the world."

But let not Christian faith and enterprise be misdirected and foiled. Let no friend of God and of humanity think of opposing the weight of a feather, or of a straw against this mighty stream of baptized atheism, while he himself, continues to float down its current—to recognize its Christianity—to shake hands with it, at the communion table—to sit under its teachings—to countenance its sanctimonious pretenses. The admitted maxim that an ungodly ministry, adhered to, inevitably drags down the flock to its own level, is full of significancy at this point. Adhesion can not be a duty—can not be admissible, when it involves apostasy—and let no man imagine his own spiritual attainments a guaranty of exception, in his own case. There is presumption, bordering on spiritual pride, in the attempted experiment.

As there is only ONE way for Christians to preserve their integrity; so there are only TWO ways for God to work out the world's redemption—"to remove the despotisms that stand in the way of Christ's reign."

The one way is by that peaceful, Christian REFORMATION, which involves, of necessity, the withdrawal of Christian reformers from despotic ministers and churches, and enlistment in the establishment and support of true and free Christian churches and ministers, in their stead, to be used as the heaven-appointed instruments of the world's reformation, and deliverance.*

* OBJECTION.—But we are too few in numbers—too feeble in resources."
ANSWER. "My grace is sufficient for thee."—"Not by might, nor by strength, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." "Where two or three are gathered together, in my name, there am I, in the midst of them."

The other way is by bloody REVOLUTION, by those "terrible things in righteousness" that shall sweep the earth as with the besom of destruction, and overturn, forcibly, the despotisms that stand in the way of Christ's reign.

The question to be settled in Rhode Island—in New England—in the United States—in Old England—on the continent of Europe—in Asia—in Africa—in the whole World—is NOT WHETHER the new existing despotisms, civil and ecclesiastical, shall be terminated, but HOW.

And the decision of this question rests chiefly with Christians—with the real friends of God and man, who are—to a great extent—connected with the churches that now exist—churches which are, in many cases, controlled and governed by despots, and wielded for the support of despotism and oppression and slavery, both in the church and in the State.

To decide in favor of remaining connected with ecclesiastical arrangements that can not be divorced from despotism and wielded against it (for there are no neutrals) is to decide, not only in favor of apostacy, but in favor of the sure alternative, BLOODY REVOLUTIONS and DESOLATING JUDGMENTS.

Christian reader! Each one must decide for himself. What decision is yours? The cause of liberty is the cause of God. Who is on the Lord's side? Who?

Who is for peaceful, CHRISTIAN REFORMATION? And who is for the DREADFUL ALTERNATIVE?

CONCLUSION.

All who prize political and civil freedom, (whether professors of religion or otherwise,) should understand distinctly that liberty can not be preserved without the active and all pervading presence of a liberty-inspired—a liberty-inspiring religion.—A community without any religion at all—if such a thing were possible—would be a soul-less community. And liberty, the soul of humanity, could not live without its atmosphere. Still less could it live in the atmosphere of a false, a despotic religion. The religion of a people whether it be spurious or genuine, always controls them, and determines their political as well as their eternal destiny. To suppose a free people clinging to the skirts of an ambitious, despotic, or servile priesthood, and listening, with confidence to religious teachers, who apologize for tyranny, is to suppose an impossibility—a self-contradiction. The question of preserving our civil, political, and religious freedom, resolves itself into the question—*What sort of religious teachers shall be sought after, and listened to, and followed, and patronised? In what schools, and under what influences shall our teachers of religion, themselves, be educated and trained?*

All this, the story of Rhode Island makes manifest. It shows us, too, that religious teachers, whose controlling influence no community ever escapes, are *never neutral*, (though in quiet times they may *seem* to be,) on the great question of human rights. Whenever the

test comes, they will show where they are, and range themselves on one side or on the other, where they belong. The pretended neutrals will always be found on the side of oppression. And just where you find them, in respect to the liberties of one race or complexion of men, just there will you find them in respect to the liberties of any other race, or complexion of men, whenever the proper opportunity for testing them is presented. There is no more real sympathy or zeal in the breasts of our ministers of religion (in city or country, in Rhode Island or out of it,) in behalf of the liberties of the masses of the common people of their own hue, and connected with their own churches, at the North, than there is in behalf of the masses, of a different hue, at the South. Common sense might have taught us that plain lesson, years ago. But God, who has determined to test and exhibit the characters of all men, has, in his all wise and holy providence, tested the characters of the leading clergy in Rhode Island, and their brethren in the surrounding States, and shown where they stand. The test next attaches itself to *the mass of the people themselves*,—those who *profess to value, at least, their own rights, and their own freedom*. Do they know enough, and will they exhibit faithfulness and self-denial enough TO SEPARATE THEMSELVES AT ALL EVENTS, FROM ALL RELIGIOUS TEACHERS WHO ARE NOT HEARTILY ENLISTED IN THE CAUSE OF UNIVERSAL HUMAN FREEDOM? If so, the preservation of their liberties will be POSSIBLE—but not otherwise, unless by CONVULSIONS that shall make the ears of him that heareth it, to tingle.

APPENDIX.

REVIEW OF PRESIDENT WAYLAND.

In the preceding pages we have alluded now and then to the two Discourses of President Wayland, but have noticed their contents only where the argument or investigation in which we were engaged, needed his testimony, or when it seemed proper to rebut his allegations in respect to the matters then under consideration. Some further notice of so distinguished a writer will, perhaps, be expected, before the subject is dismissed. Our readers will wish to know more of the positions he assumes, and of the arguments he uses, on topics of so much importance to the interests of human freedom. Our limits will restrict us to a few particulars, but we shall endeavor to select some of the most prominent.

"PREACHING POLITICS!"

Sermons on politics from President Wayland! Sermons, too, in which he takes sides in a *pending political contest* which divides the Christian community where the preacher resides,—a contest in which, (as he tells us) "men who call themselves the disciples of the Lord Jesus, and who partake of the elements of that body which was broken and of that blood which was shed for our sins" are arrayed on the side opposite to that which the preacher espouses. At the time of preaching and publishing his *first* sermon, it does not appear that these brethren against whom his arrows were leveled, were regarded otherwise than in "regular standing"—or that any "steps of gospel discipline" had been taken in respect to them; yet he publicly charges them with "one of the gravest crimes that can be committed against society"—the crime of treason. And having exhausted his argument, he proceeds to add his anathemas. By the authority and in the name of Christ, he assures them that unless they give up *their* views of civil liberty, and of political duty, and practically adopt his own, they shall be disowned by the Judge of all, at the last day.* Nor does he

* Having laid down by his exposition of Romans xiii. 1, etc. the doctrine of passive and implicit submission to existing governments, the preacher adds—"The laws which I have repeated to you are those which Christ has enacted. If you are his disciples, you must obey them, or he will declare, 'I never knew you.' You must choose, therefore, in this matter, whom you will serve." Sermon, p. 30.

stop here. Lest his preaching should seem to lack the support of example, he mingles actively in the political contest against his brethren. And how and where does the "legate of the skies" do this? At the polls? and with his vote? Not exactly: but in the military ranks, with his musket! Lest his sermons should not suffice to convince his Christian brethren of their political errors, he will try what virtue there is in powder and ball! An *impression*, in some way, he is determined to make. Of the earnestness and zeal of the preacher there can be no question.

What has become of "the dirty waters of politics," now? Of the duty of Christians and ministers to stand aloof from them, lest their piety should be soiled—their spirituality impaired—the churches distracted—their peace disturbed—the Holy Spirit grieved—souls neglected—and revivals of religion prevented?—What has become of the maxim that a preacher should know "nothing save Jesus Christ, and him crucified," and that therefore, the political responsibilities and sins of men is a theme with which the pulpit should not be desecrated? Where are now, those "Limitations of Human Responsibility" with which President Wayland was wont to quiet the consciences of Christians, when their high political duties were urged on their attention?

In his second Discourse, (July 21st,) after about two month's time for reflection, the preacher does not appear to have changed his views of the duty of political preaching. What shall we make of all this? Had President Wayland and the leading clergy, of the same views, been leading their flocks in the wrong track, all the while they were urging upon them the Christian duty of abstaining from politics, and fencing themselves round with "*Limitations*" that should restrict them from redressing, at the ballot-box, the wrongs of the poor? Or does political action become a Christian duty only when the usurpations of the rich need support? When the rights of the people must needs be put down?

PATRICIAN PULPITS, AND CHURCHES—A PICTURE, BY PRESIDENT WAYLAND.

In his second discourse, the preacher *vindicates*, at some length, the duty of preaching politics, and there is a strain of confession for past delinquencies, mingled with the argument.* In the course of his remarks, we have the following.—

"I am therefore obliged to confess that the pulpit must be responsible, in part, at least, for much of the error that has vitiated the public mind.—The design of the public ministrations of religion is to pur-

* Did the preacher mean to confess as a fault, what he boasted of, as a merit, in the beginning of his first Sermon on the politics of R. Island? He then said—"All who have ever known me will bear me witness, that I have never mingled in the strife of politics. Never, that I know of, have I uttered a syllable, either from the pulpit or the press, at which men of any political party have taken exception."—Then, he must have done little to remove political iniquity, or to qualify himself to grapple with the political dispute in Rhode Island.

suade men to discharge their duties to God and each other. The evidence of religious character is found, not merely in sentiments of devotion, but also in a life of piety, charity, justice, innocence and truth. If we may believe the New Testament, aside from this practical development, professions of religion are vain and hypocritical. Now I am constrained to confess that both in our preaching and in our other religious teaching, the inculcation of those tempers of heart and of that corresponding practice, which the gospel requires, has been greatly neglected. We have insisted on the necessity of certain spiritual exercises, while the necessity of a holy and virtuous life, as the fruit of those exercises, and the proof of their existence, has been suffered to fade from our recollection."——"And hence it has sometimes come to be believed that moral and religious character, having no principles in common, may be divorced from each other. One man asserts that religion has nothing to do with the regulation of his passions,—another that it has nothing to do with his business,—and another that it has nothing to do with his politics. Thus while the man professes a religion which obliges him to serve God in every thing, he declares that whenever obedience would interfere with his cherished vices, he will not serve God, at all.—And I grieve to say that the pulpit has failed to meet such sentiments at the threshhold, with its stern and uncompromising rebuke. From fear of the reproaches of men falsely professing godliness, it has been silent when it ought to have spoken out plainly.—A man may be mean, or even dishonest in his dealings, or he may be reckless about his word, or he may indulge in unhallowed passions, or he may pursue a thousand courses at variance with the Christian character, and yet, if he have occasional seasons of devotion, and hold firmly to the doctrines which are professed by his church, he may attend the sanctuary sabbath after sabbath, and too frequently hear nothing which shall arouse him from his *spiritual delusion*. Men are told how they must *feel*, but not how they must *act*, and the result, in many cases, is that a man's belief has but an uncertain and transient effect upon his practice."——"Now the evils resulting from this partial declaration of the doctrines of revelation, are manifold. *The standard of moral character, among professors of religion, may thus even sink below the level of the community around them. They cease to be the light of the world*—Nay more; their actions are pleaded as an apology for the wickedness of other men. Hence *the light that is in them becomes darkness*. And again, the moral effect of the religion of Christ is the great evidence, to mankind, of its divine authority. If no such effect is produced, men with much apparent reason, deny its claims to such an authority."

WHOSE IS THE PICTURE?

Remarkable statements these! Astounding developments! Is it possible that they come from the pen of President Wayland? It is even so! And they justify all that even President Green has said, in his obnoxious sermon, entitled "*Iniquity and a Meeting*"! What have the fanatical advocates of human rights ever said of the condi-

tion of the churches and ministry by whom the claims of fundamental morality and of the wronged poor are overlooked, that goes beyond these concessions of Pres. Wayland? The facts he records, and the sentiments he expresses, are identical with the "uncharitable denunciations" of the abolitionists! In only one spot on the canvass, could the colors of the picture have been brightened by the boldest pencil among them. President Wayland *might* have said, and said truly, that many of the pulpits he describes as having failed to *rebuke* the heresies he exposes, have been forward in the *manufacture and propagation* of them. Who, among the men in the churches, "falsely professing godliness," and through "fear" of whom the prophets, (as President Wayland assures us,) have become as dumb dogs—who, among them, we demand, ever dreamed of as many sophistical methods of divorcing their religion from their activities and relations, and throwing off or "*limiting*" the "*responsibilities*" connected with them, as are to be found in the "LIMITATIONS" of President Wayland? Who does not know that this is the standing text-book of the "false professors" whom the President so correctly describes?

The preacher must have witnessed, *somewhere*, the picture he has drawn. *Where* could it have been, if not in the churches whose ministers bid them stand aloof from the "dirty politics" of "relieving the oppressed, and executing judgment between a man and his neighbor?" What cities, more signally than those of Rhode Island, have been under the influence of such preaching? And what churches, more completely than those where the Thanksgiving Sermons of Drs. Tucker and Wayland were delivered, and where they were acceptable to the leading members? His own use of the confessionary terms "*we*" and "*our*," in his account of the defective preaching he censures, bears testimony not to be misunderstood, on this point. But did it never occur to the preacher that the defective teaching he describes must have been most effective on those who most confided in it? And were not these his own partisans? And did he not see that the picture he has drawn, finds its most distinct and glowing original in the very scenes that *he* and *they*—the preacher and his hearers, were then enacting? In their violent and lawless outrages upon human rights, and their impious "Thanksgivings" for their ungodly triumph over Constitutional "law and order?" The nation and posterity will see this, if the preacher and his hearers did not. And the bad effects of the now prevalent mode of preaching will be read in the political history of Rhode Island.

IMPORTANT CONCESSIONS.

The concessions of the Sermon, are nevertheless cheering. They show that the light of truth can not forever be shut out from the American churches. It has to be admitted that *religion* has something to do with *politics*, after all—that "civil difficulties" have to be discussed in sermons—that defective religious teachings lead to wicked political practices—that the Bible and its teachings have to be sought after, before political disputes can be properly adjusted—nay,

more than this, that, in such cases, the righteous awards of the final judgment are not unfrequently suspended upon the rectitude of men's decisions! Solemn and startling truths, these; truths that shall yet make heartless statesmen quake, and cover the faces of their clerical parasites with confusion! Truths too, that shall introduce more scriptural tests into our churches than now prevail, when "*evidence of religious character*" is sought after, and it is to be decided whether men's "*professions of religion are hypocritical and vain.*" In all this, as well as in preaching politics, the friends of righteous government and equal liberty can not fail to remember that they have the sanction and authority of President Wayland.

"OUT OF THINE OWN MOUTH WILL I JUDGE THEE."

To the law and to the testimony, then, and let not President Wayland and his partisans shrink from the scrutiny. The RIGHT and WRONG of the case, are, of course, the pivots of the argumentation, in this Rhode Island controversy, if the judgment day, (as the preacher assured his hearers,) is to determine, by its awful verdict, the destiny of human souls, in accordance with the rectitude of their decisions. All this must be true, unless the adjuration of the Sermon be a mere "flourish of rhetoric"—an unworthy artifice—a pious fraud—a breath of bombast—a sacerdotal bull.

We had a right to expect, then, that in approaching the discussion, President Wayland would enter minutely and correctly into the *facts* of the case, and bring them to the test of those changeless *principles* of eternal RECTITUDE by which all human actions are to be tried. But did he do this? Or did he show plainly that he dared not encounter such a test, after all?

"*This difficulty*, as you are all aware, (says the preacher) arose upon the question of suffrage." Having described the existing restrictions in the exercise of this right, and being sensible, as he afterwards informs us, that this restriction "gave rise to odious and unkind comparisons," and that "the representation had become palpably unequal,"—he nevertheless adds, in respect to the suffrage laws—"with the wisdom of this provision, I have nothing to do. A very able argument might easily be made out on either side, of the question."

If "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of *wisdom*"—if *justice* and wisdom, where human rights are concerned, be one and the same, then President Wayland (so he tells us) *has nothing to do* with the RIGHT or the WRONG of the question on which "the difficulty arose!" On *this* point (the very turning point of the whole controversy) he would be thought to be still in doubt! A very able argument, he thinks, might be made, on either side of the question. The claims of ACRES on the one hand, and of HUMAN NATURE, on the other, are so nearly balanced, in his mind, that, with all his philosophical acumen, and ethical skill, and theological lore, and Biblical erudition, the learned instructor of a divided community, has found himself utterly unable to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion. As to the RIGHT of the case, "upon which this difficulty arose," he pre-

tends to know nothing *about* it! He "has nothing to do" *with* it! He spares himself the trouble of the inquiry—the inconvenience of taking a manly position, on the side of the *true* and the *right*. But he has found out, nevertheless, by *some* process, on which side the clerical ANATHEMA MARANATHA is to be placed, and with all due dignity and stately solemnity does he pronounce it!

> "From such apostles, Oh! ye mitred heads,
> Preserve the church; and lay not careless hands
> On skulls that can not teach, and will not learn."

CONVENIENT NEUTRALITY.

To have had an opinion on the *moral merits* of the question upon which he had so zealously taken sides, pulpit-wise, and musket-wise, might have been somewhat inconvenient to President Wayland, just at that time. If he had decided the delicate question, in favor of the right of free suffrage, how could he excuse the concession, to his munificent patrons, who had so long and so strenuously maintained the opposite position? [And the preacher's habit, as he tells us, (p. 5.) had always been not to "utter a syllable, either from the pulpit or the press, at which men, of any political party" should "take exception!"] How should he vindicate himself and them, in the present struggle? And how would he make out the charge of treason and anarchy against the people, for only asserting and maintaining their heaven-conferred *rights?*

On the other hand, if he openly and unambiguously *denied* the right of suffrage, how should he and his friends avail themselves of the current pretense that every body is in favor of free suffrage in Rhode Island? And how would it agree with his statement, [p. 6.] that his own opinion has always been in favor of the extension of the suffrage?

Does any one marvel how a neutral or hesitant position, on such a point can be maintained? Let him compare the "Elements of Moral Science" with the "Limitations of Human Responsibility." No balance master need be at a loss, who can wield implements like these. He has only to throw one of the books into each scale, and he may "smile delighted with the eternal poise."

EVASION—"POINT NO POINT."

But President Wayland would have it that a new issue is now formed. That the question is *not* whether the people are entitled to the *suffrage*, but whether a majority of them have a right to *change the government* without leave of the Charter Assembly. But how does that alter his position? Who can help seeing that the distinction is without a difference? That the decision of the latter question must depend upon the decision of the former? That, if the people have a right to the suffrage, then they have a right to a government that shall maintain that right? That the right of suffrage implies and includes the right to remodel the government at pleasure? That the right of the individual is the right of the mass of individuals? That

as the *first* question, (that of the right of suffrage) is decided, so the *second* question—if it be another—(the question of the right of organizing a government) must be decided likewise?

The learned teacher who "*has nothing to do*" with the first question, ought, in decency, to seal his lips, on the second, or he ought not to expect his decisions, on the latter question, should be accounted trustworthy, till he has satisfied himself in respect to the former.

To evade this, it will be necessary to assume that the matter of suffrage is altogether a question of expediency, and not of right. And it will follow that the matter of popular sovereignty is a question of expediency, and not of right. Then comes the conclusion that the question whether the majority of the people of Rhode Island should assert and exercise sovereign power, was a question of expediency, and not of right! And how, on this principle, will President Wayland, or any body else, fasten the guilt of moral wrong upon them, for doing as they have done? And where is the moral warrant for charging on them crime, misdemeanor, or high treason?

NEUTRALITY, NOT NEUTRAL.

But the truth is—President Wayland does decide, strongly, against the *right* of free suffrage, *as* a right, after all, whatever expressions of doubt he may sometimes make, and notwithstanding he sometimes admits that it would have been *better* for the oligarchy to have granted it, graciously, long ago, and so saved themselves all the anxiety and trouble of the contest.

The *right* of suffrage is denied by President Wayland when he "blushes" to think that those who have pertinaciously refused it, for half a century, and who, "until within a very short time," regarded the whole movement in its favor "a farce" and "took no notice" of it, have, for that cause, been represented as "despots." He does so, when he affirms that under the Charter "government, every man has been most perfectly protected," and "enjoyed the most perfect liberty,"—(p. 9.) and when he says "No instance has ever been adduced, so far as I have been informed, of any oppression or injustice which has occurred under it." [the Charter.] (p. 12.)

If the people had a *right* to the suffrage, then, in being deprived of it, they were deprived of their rights, and instead of being "protected" in them, were oppressed, and despoiled of them. The act was "injustice," and the actors were "despots"—otherwise, words have no meaning.

THE PREACHER'S IDEA OF LIBERTY, AND THE PEOPLE'S RIGHTS.

It may be worth while to linger a little, just at this point, and ascertain, if we can, how much liberty, if any, such religious teachers as President Wayland think the people may claim as their *inherent right*—how much, they, themselves, as preachers of *righteousness*, will exhort the men in power to recognize and protect.

It can not be the right of *suffrage*. It can not be the right of trial by a jury of equals, or peers. It can not be the independent right to

sue, in a court of justice, without leave and assistance of some member of a superior and privileged caste, when he is wronged. It can not be the right to representation, in the legislature by whom he is governed, and by whom he is taxed and required to perform services for the State. It can not be the right of peaceful and orderly sojourn and residence in any town in the State "where it liketh him best," without leave of the landholders residing in that town, with their oldest sons. It can not be in the right to vote for the men by whom the wars are declared, in which they shall be called upon to shoulder their muskets. It can not be the right to "choose judges and officers, in all their gates, to rule the people with just judgment." For the majority of the people of Rhode Island are, and have been deprived of all these rights, and President Wayland "blushes" to think that those who withhold them, have been accounted despots.

But why dwell on items like these? We have before us President Wayland's "grateful acknowledgments to those of our fellow citizens who periled their lives in support of liberty and law"—(p. 10.) that is, the "liberty and law" that consists in the forcible extinguishment of these rights!—"Rhode Island" he thinks "will long have occasion to remember them with gratitude." (p. 11.) And we have before us, his second sermon of Thanksgiving, for the suppression of "Constitutional law" "by a lawless soldiery"—the establishment of "no law but a suppression of all law!" "*Rhode Island,*" in the preacher's vocabulary must mean something besides the majority of the *people.*

"The representation had become palpably *unequal*" says the teacher, —but then, "every man has been most perfectly protected."—"No instance of any oppression or *injustice* has occurred!" Those in power, who will not correct these inequalities are not despots! What sort of dictionaries and ethical writings are in use at Brown University, we are at loss to conjecture. When Webster would define *unequal,* he has to say, it is "partial, *unjust,* not furnishing equivalents to the different parties." He connects the word with "inequitable, iniquitous!" And when God, in the Bible, would deny the injustice and despotism of *his* government, he declares that his ways are not *unequal.* The Charter Government of Rhode Island, it seems, must be defended from the charge of despotism, by a different process.

The zeal of our author, however, in his defense, is untiring—his ingenuity unequaled. Witness the following: (p. 12.)

"It is however, proper to remark, that under it [the Charter] this State has enjoyed unexampled prosperity." [And doubtless the *people* were made for the *State*—the *landocracy!*] "The people of Rhode Island," he continues, "whether voters or not, felt an honest pride in possessing the oldest form of social organization existing in any part of this new world, from Labrador to Cape Horn. No instance has ever been adduced, so far as I have been informed, of any oppression or injustice which has occurred under it. A form of social organization which has maintained this character for one hundred and eighty years, in the midst of a people proverbially jealous of their rights,

could not, surely, contain any element essentially unfavorable to liberty." In a note to this paragraph, President Wayland introduces the testimony of Mr. Bancroft, who says, in his history of the United States—"The Charter government, constituting, as it then seemed, a true democracy, and establishing a political system, which few, besides the Rhode Islanders themselves, believed to be practicable, is still in existence," &c., &c. "The government which was hardly *thought to contain checks enough on the power of the people* to endure among shepherds and farmers, protects a dense population, and a widely extended commerce. *No where in the world, have life, liberty, and property been safer than in R. Island.** Bancroft, Vol. ii. p. 64."

Who can resist eloquence like this? Or who will doubt, henceforward, the ample liberty and protection of the Rhode Islanders under their Charter? And, notwithstanding their fifty years' struggle, who will question that the entire mass, "whether voters or not"—"the reckless Dorr party" and all, "felt a natural pride," (as doubtless do the laborers in the South "whether voters or not") in the antiquity of their fetters? The preacher must commiserate their chagrin on reflecting, as perhaps they may, on the superior antiquity of the "forms of social organization which have been maintained" in Hindostan, in Burmah, on the Guinea Coast, and in China! And had not the South Americans thrown off the Spanish yoke, the people there, might have outboasted President Wayland's Rhode Islanders. What a touching appeal our orator would be able to make, if requisite, to the serfs and peasantry ("whether voters or not!") of Prussia, of Austria, and of Poland! How opportune that the naughty Constitutionalists of Rhode Island should have had the benefit of his pious hints on their blindness in not preferring the *antiquity* of a government to its *rectitude* and *freedom?* Can they doubt (the Charterists, plainly, do not) that the greatest defect of the Charter government is its want of "*checks enough upon the power of the people?*" Will they not believe that they have a "pure democracy" when "Mr. Bancroft, the historian of the United States, very explicitly" tells them so? Or rather, when he tells them (what President Wayland seems to consider the same thing) that their fathers, 180 years ago, had, "as it *then seemed*, a pure democracy?" And will not every body believe, on the testimony of Mr. Bancroft, or President Wayland, or some body else, that the government of S. Carolina is, or once "seemed" (no matter which) "a pure democracy," and therefore the entire population, "whether voters or not" are perfectly "safe, in life, liberty, and property," and are contented with their condition, and "proud" of their ancient government?

It is easy to see how much, and what sort of *liberty* the people of the United States will have, when the public sentiment shall have been moulded by the teachings of such ministers of religion as President Wayland.

* The italicisings are taken from Pres. Wayland's pamphlet, and they show that he endorses the statements.

TIME-HALLOWED INIQUITY.

Since the argument drawn from the *antiquity* of the Charter government, with its "*palpably unequal*" provisions, has been seriously brought forward, it should not fail to receive, from an intelligent, (if not from a proverbially jealous) community, the serious reprehension it merits. Shall men in power be thus taught that a successful perpetuation of their *wrongs* shall, in time, become their guaranty and their *sanction?* While God has said that he will "visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him," (and show their hatred by oppressing his poor,)—that he will make the later generations responsible for the public wrongs of their predecessors which they had witnessed only to imitate and repeat—(as He brought upon the generation in Christ's time all the righteous blood shed from the days of Abel,)—shall the ministers of religion, whose business it is to *teach* this fearful truth, *reverse* it? Shall they plead the venerable antiquity of confessedly "unequal" arrangements, as a palliation of their wickedness? Shall they foster a wicked "pride" in them? Shall they virtually tell an injured people, that because their "proverbially jealous" ancestors have submitted for an hundred and eighty years, they have, therefore, forfeited their rights?

Who does not see that such teachings naturally embolden oppressors, while at the same time they insult and madden the oppressed? The Charterist who listened to this sermon, could not but infer that the people might, with impunity, be despoiled of their rights, because their fathers had been, before them, and that the preacher was ready, on that ground, to denounce the assertion of their rights, as rebellion against God!—And the suffrage men could not fail to perceive, that by this rule, their *present* acquiescence would be made an argument and a bar against their own, or their children's remonstrances in *future!* And thus, both parties were incited to the deadly encounter. This one paragraph is sufficient to account for the second military demonstration in Rhode Island. One such sermon were enough to embroil any State where such "palpably unequal" regulations obtain, as are there witnessed.

INVINCIBLE ARGUMENTS.—DESPOTISM DISPROVED.

But our learned author will not consider himself confuted, merely because it is made evident that his doctrines are inconsistent with human *liberty!* Not at all! So he seems to tell us, pretty distinctly, and with an air of no little self-complacency and triumph. See his first Sermon, pages 39, 40.

"I may be told this is new doctrine, and restrictive of liberty. I reply, it is no newer than the times of the Apostles, and it is just as restrictive as the Holy Spirit himself has made it." [Then comes the anathema, as before quoted, and which we need not repeat.]

That his doctrine is comparatively *new in this country*, and at variance with the doctrine of our revolutionary fathers, he does not deny.

Perhaps he thought his arguments so weighty that all good Christian people would have to yield their assent, and relinquish their liberties, in order to remain Christians! Let us examine a few of these arguments.

In disproving the despotisms of the R. Island Charterists, the following passage occurs; and from the wide circulation it has obtained as an extract, in the papers, both political and religious, we conclude it is counted among the most eloquent and forcible appeals of the Sermon. Speaking of the city of Providence, the preacher says:

"I never knew a community in which the deserving poor were so immediately relieved, or where a desire for the good of the whole was more universally diffused. Let any one come among us, and look around upon the monuments of our patriotism and social feeling. By whom was that Atheneum founded, and so endowed that, for a trifling expense, its literary treasures are at the command of every citizen among us? Who are the warmest friends of our common schools, and who have been the most zealous to carry intellectual and moral cultivation to every bosom and every fire-side? Who are the men, that in times of public distress, and of pecuniary pressure, have been most ready, by their advice, their endorsements and their loans, to relieve the embarrassed, and to assist the failing? I blush to say, it is the very men who have been denounced as tyrants and oppressors. And this has been done, must I say it? or at least it has been counteanced and abetted, by men who call themselves the disciples of the Lord Jesus, who partake of that body which was broken, and that blood which was shed for our sins, and who profess to be cultivating in their hearts the temper of an holy heaven. [First Sermon, p. 25.]

We shall have no occasion to discredit the fidelity of the picture here drawn. We *might* shade it a little, to be sure, if we chose, by placing it by the side of that *other* picture, (of the pulpits and churches in Providence,) drawn by the same pencil, which we have already transferred to our columns. If any discrepancy should be remarked, on comparing them with each other, the author should perhaps have the benefit of his own hint, that "the standard of moral character" in a "surrounding community" may not, in all cases, *sink so low* as in those churches where the members may be "mean or even dishonest in their dealings"—may "pursue *a thousand* courses which are at variance with the Christian character"—may practically declare that "whenever obedience would interfere with [their] cherished vices, [they] will not serve God, at all"—and yet, "sabbath after sabbath, too frequently hear of nothing which shall arouse them from their spiritual delusion."

Admitting, however, that *all* the Charterists in Providence are all that Dr. Wayland describes them to be, in this *brighter* picture of his, and that *none* of the Constitutionalists can come in for a share in the credit of these liberal and patriotic doings, what does it prove? How does it meet the claims of the disfranchised? How does it prove that

they are not wickedly despoiled of their inalienable rights? And that those who deny them their exercise, are not tyrants?

"The representation had become palpably, unequal," says President Wayland. Is it equalized by the establishment of the Providence Atheneum? The giving alms to the poor? The endorsement of tradesmen's notes? Has *John Tetzel* started up as fresh from his grave as though Luther had never lived, to preach over again, in the name of Holy Mother Church, the old doctrine of commutations and indulgences? A crime, *here*, to be expiated by a virtue, *there!* And And by a virtue, too, which is summarily comprehended in this first—second—last—great command of priestly artifice—"*money*—MONEY—MONEY?" The giving of money is doubtless a Christian duty. But can it purchase the forgiveness of sins? Or can it prove that they have never been committed?

And so the disfranchised majority of the people of RHODE ISLAND have not been, and are not robbed of their rights, because the citizens of *Providence* have been furnished (no! but "for a trifling expense" they *may* be!) with the literary treasures of an Atheneum!

The operatives of Woonsocket and Pawtucket, of Natick and of Arkwright, and the younger sons of the landholders, all over the State, were not permitted to vote. But there was "no injustice"—no "oppression"—no "tyranny"—in *that!* For *why?* The good people of Providence have established a public library, and the *rich* have contributed more than those who were *not* rich! There's a lesson of "Moral Science," from a learned College President, worth remembering!

The shoe-makers and hod-carriers, and cartmen and plowmen, all over the State, claimed the right to be represented in the government that taxed them, and drummed them into the ranks of the military. And ("*must I say it?*") they insisted upon this as their *right*, notwithstanding the Providence capitalists had endorsed the notes of their customers, and dependents, and hangers-on, and eulogists, at the Bank! Proof positive that they were "ignorant and abandoned men, urged on to treason!"

Some of these men went so far as to say that those who withheld from them their God-given rights, were "tyrants and oppressors"—in other words, that those who did wrong were wrong-doers—at least, they "countenanced and abetted" the men who said this:—patronized their papers, and listened to their speeches, and yet "called themselves the disciples of Christ—preparing for a holy heaven"! Truly! The churches must be purified from such members!

And even the patrons of common schools have been "denounced as tyrants and oppressors"! At this rate, the Autocrat of Prussia, whose common schools, (though carefully managed in such a manner as to shut out the obnoxious dogmas of equal rights,) are the standing admiration of our *literati**—the king of Prussia, we say, will

* Patrician patronage, and consequent supervision of common schools, by the bye, is not always the certain evidence of a solicitude for popular liberty. The

perhaps be charged with despotism, by and by, merely because he does not permit freedom of speech and of the press on moral and political subjects! And those who make the charge will even claim to be Christians! Horrible to think of! And then, an edition of President Wayland's Sermon will need to be published in the language of Berlin—perhaps of Warsaw and St. Petersburg! An edition might be useful in England, too, if it could convince the fleeced and plundered operatives, ("*protected*"—to absolute starvation!) that graciously distributed ALMS is ample compensation for the wicked violation of their RIGHTS? Consolatory doctrines, these, for the "proverbially jealous" people of Rhode Island!*

"The present Grand Duke of Tuscany, Leopold II., is beloved by his subjects. He *does not allow them* POLITICAL RIGHTS; but he tries to prepare for them LITERARY AMUSEMENTS." So writes the traveling correspondent of the New York Observer. The Grand Duke is a shrewd politician, and doubtless has his accomplished literary dependants, to counsel and applaud him.

Be this as it may, no citizen of Providence, it is to be charitably presumed, after having been enlightened by President Wayland's Sermon, will ever be so wicked as to claim the inalienable rights of a MAN, and to lisp the suspicion that those who withhold them are *despots*, so long as he has occasion to negotiate "*a loan*" from a Charterist,† to send a child to *school*, to peep into the Providence *Athenæum*, or to be training himself "for a holy heaven" in one of those *churches*, in which the standard of moral character, among professors of religion may sink below the level of the community around them," without hearing any thing from the pulpit, "which shall arouse [them] from [their] spiritual delusion." [Second Sermon, page 23.]

Such are President Wayland's proofs that the Charter authorities of R. Island are not tyrants. From the nature of the argument and the tone of his second Sermon, (July 21st,) we infer that the proof is supposed to cover the whole ground, and to demonstrate that there was no despotism in "the suppression of all law," by a "lawless soldiery" in Rhode Island. For all was done by "order," and with the aid and sanction of the men whose liberality, we are told, proves they are not

---

king of Prussia understands his game. The common school is as necessary to him as the state church is to the crown of England. And the people of Massachusetts have occasion to remember the successful attempt to introduce the fundamental dogmas of despotic governments into their common schools, in the shape of a "Political Class Book."

* A people "*proverbially jealous* of oppression," are "proverbially" *made* so, by having been "proverbially" oppressed. Witness the poor people of Ireland.

† We should like to be told how it can be made to appear that the *loan of money*, at a fair *interest*, any more than the *sale of goods*, at a fair *profit*, proves that a man is not a political despot? If the borrower is to be servant to the lender, as completely as Pres. Wayland's argument supposes he ought to be, the friends of freedom have a fresh illustration of the beauties of the boasted "credit system." Heaven bless and guide the hard-handed and independent working men of Rhode Island, and preserve them from having endorsed notes at Bank!

tyrants! And it was "after rising as one man" in the enterprise, that they came together for "thanksgivings," and to talk of "the intrepidity and skill of our commanders, the patriotism of our people," &c. &c.

Marauding parties, to be sure, (as they thought "proper,") appropriated to their service, all the vehicles and teams they met or overtook—they seized whom they would, without legal warrant; in the same manner houses were entered, by day and by night, families frightened or driven into the fields or forests, property ransacked, meeting houses entered on the sabbath, worship broken up, preachers and their flocks seized, bound, driven along the roads at the point of the bayonet, insulted, and imprisoned, *for no crime!* But then, the instigators, supporters, abettors, and actors in all this, "*after rising as one man*" to the enterprise, and still abetting and supporting the "martial" authorities under whose orders all this was done, must never be charged with despotism! For, see! Yonder stands the Providence Atheneum! Beside it is a school house! At a little distance are men endorsing their neighbor's notes, at Bank. And there, in the back ground are ladies and gentlemen distributing alms to the poor! Wherever you can group a similar picture, the world over, "with slight variations" (as the almanacs say,) *there*, you may prove that the people enjoy all their rights, and that there are no despots! There is no despotism in England—none in Europe—nor in the American slave States!

We will consider next, the arguments by which the learned preacher proves the Constitutionalists to be rebels and anarchists.

ASPERSIONS REPELLED.

We pass by, of course, all his grave arguments against "the idea of equalization of property, as absurd as it is wicked," (Thanksgiving Sermon, p. 17.) and also what he says, on the same page, against a portion of the people's appealing from Constitutional law and judicial decisions, to military force (as by the bye, the Charterists have in effect done*)—together with all the preacher has to say, in both Sermons, of a majority claiming "the right to do all it has power to do," (first sermon p. 17.) thus merging "all Constitutional right in the will of the strongest."

When he shall have attempted to *show* that, either in theory or in practice, the Constitutionalists have proposed or done any thing of the kind, it will be in time to examine his proofs. Till then, the unsupported imputation will scarcely be worth our attention.

The reader of the preceding pages, has the evidence, already, that there is no foundation for these charges. It was the Landholders,

* We see it stated by Ex-Gov. Morton, of Massachusetts, who says he learns it from "public statements by both sides," that the suffrage men were desirous of suspending movements till a decision of the validity of their Constitution could be had, by the highest judicial authority in the country. Why then, was it not done? Did the Charterists refuse?—The highest Constitutional authorities, we know, are against them.

and not the Suffrage men, that attempted to fasten arangements upon the State, by which—*not* the majority, to be sure—but the minority —should claim "the right to do all it had power to do"—"merging all Constitutional right in the will of the strongest" and fixing no available bounds to their power. This is what they always have done—what they are determined to maintain, by force of despotic law, and even by "the suppression of all law." But the Suffrage men, and *they only*, proposed and adopted a Constitution, in which the powers of the governing body were *limited and defined*. So that the eloquent declamation of President Wayland, on this topic, and his quotation from Dr. Channing, are against his own party and in favor of his opponents, unless he claims that a minority, in distinction from a majority, may safely be intrusted with unlimited irresponsible power, while no Constitutional limitations can make it safe to trust the majority. Why seek to conceal the true issue? Why not come out boldly in favor of the doctrine—*not* that power of the majority must be limited, (which no one has questioned,) but that the majority ought not to govern, at all—that the people ought not to be sovereign—but that the power ought to reside in the select few? *That* is the doctrine *practiced*. Why not let it be the doctrine *defended*, if its friends have confidence in its soundness? Why mine in the dark? Why labor to exchange costume with an opponent, in order to raise against him the cry of "*the wolf*"!

It ill becomes a partizan of those who refused to incorporate the customary Bill of inherent, inalienable, heaven-conferred *human rights* into their Constitution,* to raise the hue and cry of unlimited power, "*the power of the strongest*," against those who did the reverse, and *for having* done it, are driven like the partridge upon the mountains *by* "the power of the strongest."

THE CONSTITUTIONALISTS CONFUTED.

There are three principal arguments by which President Wayland would convict the Constitutionalists of insurrection—of anarchy—of rebellion.—They are these. 1. The binding power of oaths of allegiance.—2. The inviolability of the social compact.—3. The apostolic injunction of submission to "the powers that be."—Concerning these three arguments, and their application, we would make three general remarks.

First. They are precisely the same arguments that have been urged for centuries against the friends of civil and religious freedom—the same with which Milton, and Cromwell, and Bunyan, and all the pu-

* In the Bay State Democrat of Sept. 9th, we see it stated that at the Charterist Convention, a motion was formally made and carried, to strike out the express language of the Declaration of Independence, affirming inalienable rights, and that it was declared by a distinguished member of that body, whom he names, that those words were only "*rhetorical flourishes*, intended to urge on our fathers to a war with the mother country." Whether this statment be true or not, we know that the words and the sentiments are not found in the landholders' Constitution.

pitans of England, had to contend—the same that were urged by the tories, English and American, against the fathers of our American revolution—the same that were met and rebutted by the New England clergy of that period.

Second. They are arguments which, *if admitted in their full force*, as held by the preacher himself, might be applied and wielded against the Charterists of Rhode Island, with much more force and pertinency than against the Constitutionalists.

The disfranchised majority of the people of Rhode Island, who were never admitted to the polls, and who are not eligible to office, have never taken any oath of allegiance to any civil government—certainly not to the Charter government of Rhode Island. What oath of allegiance did they break, by forming a State Constitution? By organizing and supporting a State government?

But the Charter officers of State *had* taken the oath of allegiance to the Constitution of the United States. This bound them to "maintain justice"—to preserve the "public tranquility"—to secure the "blessings of liberty"—to respect the "guaranty" "to every State in the Union" of "a republican form of government"—to submit to that sovereignty of the people which the Constitution, founded upon, and (in effect and intent) comprising the Declaration of Independence, was intended to secure and maintain. This oath they violated, when they took up arms against the legally adopted Constitution of Rhode Island and its officers. As much so, as any other State officers would do, who should refuse to submit to the newly elected officers and rebel against them, instead of resigning them their seats.

The stronger President Wayland makes "the social compact"—the more he insists on the danger and the criminality of frequent, needless, irregular, forcible and lawless change—the more he insists on the apostolic injunction (as he interprets it) of "submission to the powers that be"—so much the more emphatically does he, in effect, condemn the course of the Charterists of Rhode Island.

"The powers that be"—*in fact*—in this country—is "the sovereign people." This we have proved. It is too notorious for dispute. And it is the government, *in fact*, whatever be its character, that President Wayland's doctrine requires him to recognize and maintain. And the government, *in fact*, of Rhode Island, was the Constitutional government under Gov. Dorr. Be it so, that the Charterists thought the change that had been made, was needless and unwise. *It had, nevertheless, been made*—and made too, in accordance with the usages and precedents of the country. Or *however* made, it *had been* made—and the doctrine of the sermon is, that the governments that have *been made* (no matter how, or for what object, or by whom,) are to be recognized—must not be forcibly overturned. It is *change* that the arguments under review, deprecate. Why, then, make *this* change? And by *force*, too? If the change made by the Constitutionalists was unwise, *because* it was a change, why make *another?* If the new Constitution contained blemishes, it contained provisions for amend-

ment. Why not wait and make them, "in a lawful manner" instead of overthrowing an existing government by force?—In every view we can take, the doctrines of the sermon, whether false or true, condemn the course of those on whose behalf it was preached.

There is no way to evade this conclusion but by saying that the Constitutional government was not the *existing* government *in fact*, because it had not the *physical* power. But to make *this* plea would be to "appeal from Constitutional law to military force"—which the sermon justly condemns! It would be "to merge all Constitutional right in the will of the strongest" to claim for a government "the right to do all it has power to do."—By this rule "*the powers that be*" must be so construed that if Gov. Dorr had gained the military mastery for one week, and Gov. King for the next week, and so, back and forth, for years, shifting weekly, the allegiance of President Wayland would have to be transferred once a week, from the one to the other! A rule sufficiently absurd, one would think, and certainly not to be commended for its stability and exemption from change.

Third. Our third remark is this. Whatever of wisdom or of folly there may be in these three arguments of President Wayland, he evidently relinquishes all three of them, himself, as any one may see by reading the following paragraph, on the 28th page of his first sermon.

"But it may be asked, is a revolution never to be justified? I answer, the proper object of all government is to secure to every individual the *full enjoyment of* life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, or the *power* to do it, in every respect, as he will, if he interfere with the rights of no other human being. *For this purpose government is instituted;* and never, *till* it utterly fail to accomplish these purposes, *can it be rightfully overturned.* No other rule can be safely adopted, &c."

Let it be noticed, here, that the preacher professes to *give a case in* which, and a *rule by which*, a government *may* be lawfully overturned:—and that too, by the people—and on their own judgment (of course) whether or no the government has forfeited its claims to their support. President Wayland's rule of judging may be adopted by them, or some other rule, which they may think a better one. But of the rule and of the cases coming under it President Wayland allows them to judge and to act, and this covers the whole dispute in Rhode Island. If the people have this right, then oaths of allegiance —obligations to obey civil government—and the admonitions of Paul, are all to be construed accordingly. And when President Wayland shall have shown the agreement of *his own* rule for overturning worthless and wicked governments, with the oaths, obligations, and admonitions so confidently quoted by him, he will have opened a path sufficiently wide for the Constitutionalists of Rhode Island to travel in.

On the other hand, if he persists in the doctrine that no government, for any cause, may be overturned, (and *that* was the doctrine he urged against his opponents,) then the overthrow of Gov. Dorr's government,

whatever may be said of its legal validity, or of its moral character, or the aims of its administrators, comes under the same ban. The American revolution, too, is condemned by the same sweeping rule, and all changes in civil government, by the people, or any portion of them, are pronounced criminal.

LETTER OR SPIRIT?

'It is the spirit that quickeneth—the letter killeth.' Whether we would expound Paul's writings, or learn the significancy of oaths of allegiance, we must do one of two things. We must either chain ourselves down to the dead letter—the phrases—words—syllables—letters, that strike the eye or the ear, and follow *them*, without regard to the spiritual meaning—the thing signified by the symbol,—or else we must regard mainly the substance itself—the nature and reasons of the acts promised or commanded to be performed. President Wayland is at liberty, in this case, to take which method he pleases, and the issue we will cheerfully abide.

Does he go for the *spirit* of the oath of allegiance? The rational and Christian-like promise to obey a just government, *because* and *while* it is just? The admonition of Paul, as construed by the great masters of the common law, and expounded by our revolutionary fathers? by the puritans? by Milton? by "our ancient and famous lawyer Bracton," whom Milton quotes?* If so let him prove that the Charter government, with its "palpably unequal representation" is a just government, and that the Constitution of December 1841 was unjust, and his argument will be sustained, but not otherwise.

Does he choose, instead of this, to stick to the dead "letter that killeth?" Let him see how much life, even to his own cause, he can get out of it. Mark! He is to abide by the strict *letter*—the words and the syllables of Paul's admonitions, and of the oath of allegiance. How must they read, to answer his purpose? We have a right to insist, now, upon the strict letter, (for that is the principle of his argument,) and give him his "pound of flesh," according to the "bond"—

---

* This "ancient and famous" expounder of Scripture and of law, is thus quoted by Milton in his reply to Salmasius.

"A king is a king, so long as he rules well; he becomes a tyrant when he oppresses the people committed to his charge."——"The king ought to use the power of law and right, as God's minister and vicegerent: the power of wrong is the devil's, and not God's: *when the king turns aside to do injustice, he is the minister of the devil.* Since, therefore, the law is chiefly right reason, if we are bound to obey a king and a minister of God, by the very same reason and the very same law, we ought to resist a tyrant, and a minister of the devil."

The same controversy is still urged, in England. A writer in the London Non-Conformist, Rev. B. Parsons of Stroud, furnishes a translation of a portion of Romans xiii. 1, etc., commencing thus—"Let every soul be subject to supreme authorities, for there is no authority except from God, and those which are authorities have been determined by God." etc.—The writer remarks the wide difference between brute *power* and rightful *authority*. He shows that the original word in question is commonly translated "*authority*" elsewhere; and he hints that the translators of king James were misled by the servile maxims of their times.

but without drawing a drop of "Christian blood." We insist, then, that if the texts of Paul, and if the oaths of allegiance do not specify Samuel W. King's Proclamation, and James Fenner's counsel, and Col. Blodget's broadsword, and President Wayland's Sermon—if *these* are not designated, either in the Epistle, nor in the oath of allegiance, as the grand arbiters of "law and order" in Rhode Island, then, by this rule of exposition, his citation of the oath, and of Romans xiii. 1, is not to his purpose, and can avail him nothing. Absurd as would be such an exposition, it is only carrying out the principle of following the *letter* instead of the *spirit* of legal documents, and ancient writings.

THE SOCIAL COMPACT.

But what shall be said of the mysterious obligations arising from the social compact, whose inviolability is made to be more sacred than the claims of justice, of human nature, and the law of God?

The notion of a "*social compact*," as formerly held, is an absurdity, and to reason from it is to build on a pit of ashes. The fiction was this. Man was said to have been born in a state of nature, and not in a state of society. And it was only by remaining in that original, savage state, that he could retain all his natural rights. It was at his option whether he would do so or not. But having concluded to establish civil society, the "social compact" was accordingly formed, and in entering it, a man gave up a part of his natural rights for the protection of the rest. Henceforth, he was not a whole man, but only a part of a man. His civilization was at the necessary expense of his manhood. When, or where, or how, or by whose authority this mammoth town meeting of the human race was convened, who presided over it, or acted as the secretaries, nobody knew. But the school-men said it had been held, and that was enough. And they said, too, that the compact having been made, could not be unmade—that it was binding on those who had never heard of it. The theory lacked *three things*, and was founded upon *two*. It lacked truth, moral principle, and common sense. And it was founded on a forgetfulness of GOD, and an ignorance of MAN. It was a fiction convenient for tyrants, because it shrouded civil government in mystery—taught the political necessity of infringing natural rights—precluded the right of the people to introduce changes—kept God and equity out of sight, and trampled man and liberty under foot. Mr. Jefferson and others have successfully exposed and exploded this fallacy. What a pity that religious teachers, speaking in the name of Christianity, should attempt, at this late day, its resuscitation!

THE TRUE THEORY.

Power belongeth unto God. Authority is from him alone. It is no begotten conventionalism of his creatures. Compacts may honor, but can not create it. Civil government, unless it be sheer usurpation, from first to last, and in all its forms and phases, is the result of the Divine will—a part of the Divine administration. It is committed

to *man*, AS man: not to a particular family, or caste. It is inherent in man; it vests not in property, but in human beings, in all men. Man is not born *out* of it, any more than he is born out of his nature. He is a social being, and is never born *out* of society, with the sad option of coming into it, or not, as he pleases. His obligations to civil government are founded, *not* on an unreal compact, but on his real nature, rights and duties, as a social being, under the government of God. It is the whole business of civil government to protect *all* of every man's natural rights, and take none of them away from him; to execute justice between a man and his neighbor. Instead of being the jurisdiction of the individual, or of the few, over the mass, it essentially *consists* in the supervision of the *whole body* over *individuals:* of the *whole* over the *parts* of which it is composed. This feature is altogether essential to a just civil government, and can not be spared from it. Hence, the sin of the Hebrews, in seeking to throw off their responsibilities upon a monarch. God considered it rebellion against him. Hence, too, all the men in a nation are held responsible for national sins. The death-blow at midnight, in every family throughout the land of Egypt, settled that question, long ago. Pharaoh might have exacted fealty to his imaginary "social compact"—his artificial arrangements. His priests might preach the sacred tenure of oaths of allegiance *to him.* But God would hold the Egyptians amenable to the higher laws of their social nature, and to HIMSELF.

The masses may govern wrong—but they must govern. God will punish them for abdication, as truly as for wrong government. He has appointed them no substitute, at the day of judgment and they may accept of none here. Representative rulers they may have—viceroys—but they must superintend their administration. The kingship, under God, is theirs.

"Tell me not" says Montesquieu, "that the people may sometimes reason incorrectly. It is sufficient that they reason."—'There is a spirit in MAN, and the inspiration of the Almighty hath given HIM understanding.'

The people *may* govern oppressively; all *other* governors *always do*—they MUST—for a minority government is itself usurpation, and consequently oppression. Legitimate authority may fail to govern with equity; but usurped authority is iniquitous, of itself, and good can not grow out of it.

What do those mean, then, who talk of the "divine right of the wisest and best" to govern the *masses?* The "wisest and best," will be wiser and better than to undertake any such thing! They will know that the entire *mass,* of which themselves are only a *part,* is wiser than any portion of itself; as the whole is *greater* than a part. The "best" will have goodness enough to know that they have no right to take upon themselves, alone, the work and the responsibility which God has divided between them and their equal brethren.

"But have not Wisdom and Goodness an inalienable right to govern?"——What if it be so? Who shall decide who they are that, in

the comparison with their brethren, may be characterized as "Wisdom and Goodness?" The people should select their wisest and best men, for *office*, but the *government* is nevertheless, their *own*, and they may not abdicate in favor of the "wisest and best" of their species. Not one of them may be safely entrusted with such power. The "wisest and best" would not long continue such, if thus elevated.

If it be to *man*—to ALL men—to the MASSES, that God has committed the high charge of civil government, then they may not abdicate, to an angel. Gabriel himself would be an usurper, and *lose* his "wisdom and goodness," if he should displace the people of Rhode Island, and undertake, unbidden of God, to wield *their* civil government, for them. My neighbor may be much wiser and better than I. But that superior "wisdom and goodness" does not authorize him to enter my family, and govern it in my stead.

And it is not true that any select number are as capable of wielding absolutely and uncontrolled, the government of a country, as the *entire people*, by a proper supervision of their representatives, are to *govern themselves*. A Senate of John Miltons and Thomas Carlyles could not govern England as well as the people of England, *including* their Miltons and Carlyles (properly organized) could govern England. The Calhouns and Clays of the South can not govern the laborers of the South, degraded as they are, as well as they can govern themselves. And (President Wayland must pardon us) we doubt whether there is wisdom and goodness enough even in the *Charterists of Rhode Island*, priesthood and all, to govern Rhode Island as equitably and as wisely as the *entire people* could govern themselves.

The dreaded doctrine of popular sovereignty is only one branch of the more comprehensive *fact* of man's equality with man. Of all the hard lessons that man has to learn, his own equality with his own mother's children, seems surely among the hardest. When he learns that, the millennium of Christianity is ushered in. Though reasoned, or laughed, or perhaps, bayonetted out of the fancied superiority of birth, of primogeniture, and even of wealth, he will next fancy himself among the "best and the wisest." He will build his lofty pretentions on learning, on talents, on genius, or even upon humility (!) and erect a governing aristocracy upon them. You may read to him your long lists of literary shoe-makers, and eminent brick-layers, and learned blacksmiths, your chronicles of "genius" headed by Shakspeare and Bunyan—you may enumerate your Franklins and Patrick Henrys, and so on, chapter after chapter, to no purpose. He reads in them only exceptions to his rule. It never comes into his head that these are *specimens* of his race—Oh! no! these are the rare "*geniuses*" and he hopes, perhaps, to be sainted, himself, on the calendar, and stared at, with a D. D. or an LL. D. attached to his name, if he be not too shrewd or too proud to be tickled with such feathers. "The wisest and the best" must govern! So he dreams. And so dream the Charterists of Rhode Island. It is *not* the $134, worth of brick, mortar, or bog meadow, *now*! Oh! no! That dream was brok-